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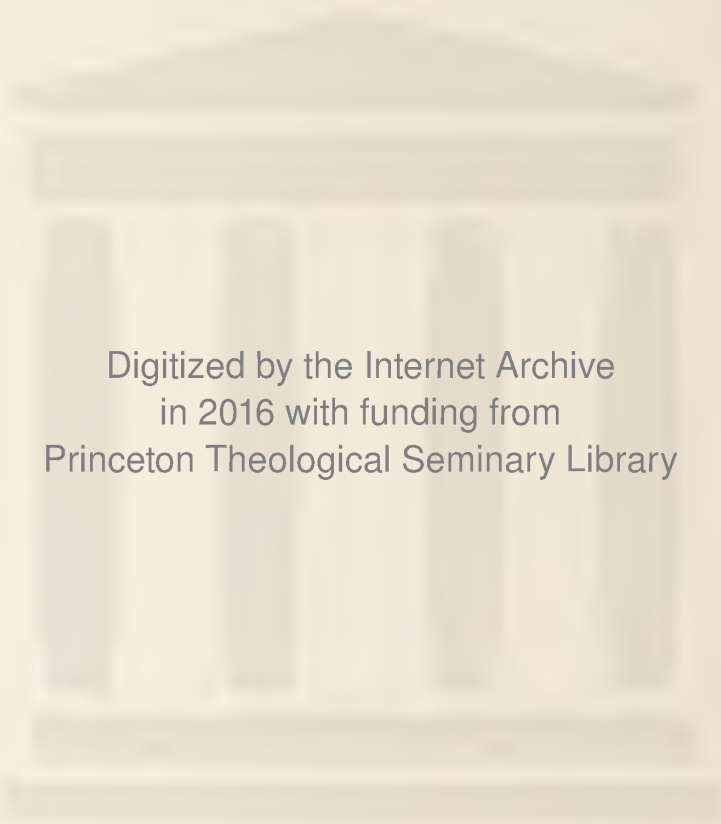
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THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

UPPLEMENTARY ISSUE, NO. 1

[For supplementary issue no. 2 - see v. 13 [1992-]

THE CHURCH AND ISRAEL:

Romans 9-11

[illegible] 1990

The 1989 Frederick Neumann Symposium
on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

SUPPLEMENTARY ISSUE NUMBER 1 1990

Daniel L. Migliore, EDITOR
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The *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* is published three times annually by the Theological Seminar of the United Presbyterian Church at Princeton, New Jersey.

Each issue is mailed free of charge to all alumni/ae and on an exchange basis with various insti tutions. Back issues are not available.

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Because the policy of the Bulletin is to publish lectures and sermons by Princeton Seminary faculty and administration, and presentations by guests on the Seminary campus, we cannot accep unsolicited material.

INTRODUCTION TO THE 1989 NEUMANN SYMPOSIUM

With this initial supplementary issue *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* expands its regular publication activity. Included in this volume are eight papers presented at the Frederick Neumann Symposium on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture held in Princeton in October, 1989. A series of similar conferences, to be held every two years, is being planned and supervised by a special committee of the Seminary faculty. We hope to publish the papers prepared for these significant meetings in biennial supplementary issues of the *Bulletin*.

The Neumann Symposiums are named in honor of Frederick Neumann (1899-1967)—missionary, pastor, scholar, and teacher—and are made possible by the generous support of his widow, Dr. Edith Neumann. Their purpose is to bring together scholars from diverse disciplines, nations, and denominational affiliations in the common task of *theological* interpretation of Scripture. While theological interpretation cannot be divorced from philological, historical, sociological, and literary studies of biblical texts, it also dares to interpret these texts as the "scripture" of a faith community, i.e. as the unique witness to the creative and redemptive activity of God who addresses us in judgment and grace here and now. Two previous Neumann symposiums were held in Princeton, one in 1986 on the theme "Church and State," and another in 1987 on the theme "Creation." Papers presented at these earlier meetings were published in the journal *Ex Auditu*.

The theme of the 1989 Neumann Symposium, "The Church and Israel: Romans 9-11," is an important but historically burdened topic for both Christians and Jews. Early in the planning of this conference, it was agreed that the presence and contribution of Jewish as well as Christian scholars would be not only desirable but essential.

In the opening essay of this volume, Paul van Buren explores the terms of the Symposium theme and the mystery of their conjunction and order. He points out that in increasing numbers "the churches have been moving toward ever clearer enunciation of the conviction that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is valid to this day." Van Buren further expresses the hope that we may now be entering a new era in the relationship between the Church and Israel. If the first brief period could be described as *the Church within Israel* (traces of which are still evident, for example, in Rom. 9-11), and if this was followed by a long, often terror-filled period that could be characterized as *the Church against Israel*, today a new period is beginning that may come to be known as *the Church with and for Israel*.

The next three essays are tightly-packed exegetical studies of the central biblical text of the Symposium. Writing on "Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Rom. 9-11," Otfried Hofius places this passage in the context of the principal argument of Romans, viz. the Pauline doctrine of God's gracious justification of the ungodly. He emphasizes that the Apostle speaks of Israel in these chapters "not in an accusatory tone but with 'deep anguish.'" Moreover, he shows that for Paul, as for the Hebrew Bible, the inescapable truth of "God's election and rejection within Israel is set in the broader framework of God's election of all Israel." When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then according to Paul "all Israel will be saved." Hofius argues that there is no ecclesiastical arrogance here; Paul envisioned this salvation of all Israel to take place not by the missionary activity of the Church but "at the return of Christ and through Christ himself."

Like van Buren, J. Christiaan Beker contends that our present theological situation requires that we recognize that anti-semitism is present not only in much of the Christian theological tradition but also in the New Testament itself. In his examination of "Romans 9-11 in the Context of the Early Church," Beker calls for an uncompromising distinction between the "contingencies" and the "coherence" of the New Testament message. "The coherence of the gospel restores the realities of God's grace in Christ to a warped human condition, which embraces both Jews and Gentiles. . . . and which invites both Jews and Christians to be 'partners in waiting,' looking forward in hope to the eschatological triumph of God, when all divisions, sufferings, and injustices will cease and when all humankind will be made whole."

Alan F. Segal provides still another exegetical perspective on Romans 9-11. In his article, "Paul's Experience and Romans 9-11," Segal focuses on Paul's ecstatic vision of Christ and his missionary experience after his conversion. According to Segal, "Paul never intended to be read systematically. He intended his remarks to a specific situation at Rome and within a specific time frame of salvation." What is of abiding significance in Paul's meditation on this theme of Church and Israel is not his particular theory of salvation history but his call to all people of faith to give up their religious pride.

In the following essay, "Paul and the Law," Bernadette J. Brooten analyzes aspects of the tension in Paul's thought concerning the law. Her thesis is that "while Paul broke sharply with Jewish dietary laws and with the Jewish commandment of circumcision in order to open the Christian congregation to Gentiles, in several other questions, especially in the areas of

gender roles and gender relations, Paul continued to be indebted to the Torah as a practical guide."

David Satran attempts to penetrate behind the "veil of rabbinic silence" concerning Paul in his study of "Paul Among the Rabbis and Fathers." He examines the key images and metaphors employed in Rom. 9-11—especially those of the potter and the clay, and the olive tree. The deep rootage of these images in the Hebrew Bible, Satran argues, shows that despite their many differences, Paul, Rabbis, and Church Fathers are interpreters of a common biblical inheritance and hence stand in a real if often overlooked proximity to each other.

In an essay that should be of special interest to readers in the Reformed theological tradition, Mary Potter Engel explores the topic, "Calvin and the Jews," giving special attention to Calvin's sermons. Careful exegete that he is, Calvin often speaks of the Jews as "the firstborn in the house of God." Nevertheless, Potter Engel shows that Calvin cannot be entirely excused from helping to pepetuate negative attitudes toward Jews even if he consistently refused to split the people of God into those "bad Jews" and us "good Christians."

In the concluding essay of the volume, "Righteousness and God's Righteousness," Michael Welker acknowledges that Rom. 9-11 is a text long associated with ideas of an omnipotent and arbitrary God. Hence "wringing insights on the theme of righteousness" from this passage is no easy task. Nevertheless, Welker shows that there are intimate connections between righteousness and mercy in both the law codes and the messianic promises of the Hebrew Bible, as well as in Rom. 9-11. He further argues that faith in the crucified Messiah brings a radical transformation of understandings of divine and human righteousness for both Jews and Gentiles. "In recognizing as Messiah Jesus of Nazareth, who was rejected and despised by Jews and Gentiles, condemned and executed in the name of their supporting order, human beings become open to the knowledge of God's righteousness, which calls into question and surpasses their previous notions and practices of righteousness."

Neither the articles printed here nor the spirited discussions that they prompted at the Symposium can be reduced to a few simple concluding theses. Instead readers will encounter diverse and even divergent arguments that provoke thought and suggest fresh lines of inquiry. Nevertheless, there is important unity in this diversity. All Symposium leaders agree that God's continuing faithfulness to the people of Israel is a central rather than peripheral element of Paul's understanding of the gospel. They also agree that

what Paul affirms about the character and purpose of God, the inseparable relation of Church and Israel, and the work of the Messiah of God is embedded in a particular faith tradition and that one must engage in close, "thick description" (Clifford Geertz) of that tradition in order to grasp its inner logic, its distinctive meanings, and the possibilities that are offered for contemporary appropriation and responsible proclamation. To this extent the articles collected in this volume show that theological interpretation of Scripture today occurs in a "post-modern" situation. The "modern" era, with its captivity to the triumphalistic assumptions of Enlightenment reason and its disdain for traditions of faith, is waning. We are perhaps ready to learn something new from ancient scriptural texts and present dialogue partners whose views are often strange, sometimes disturbing, but time and again surprisingly enriching.

Daniel L. Migliore

The Church and Israel: Romans 9-11

by Paul M. van Buren

Paul van Buren is Honorary Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Heidelberg in West Germany. He is the author of many books, including the multi-volume Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality: *Part I*, Discerning the Way; *Part II*, A Christian Theology of the Jewish People; *and Part III*, Christ in Context.

The title of this Symposium, "The Church and Israel: Romans 9-11," sets before us an agenda staggering not only in its richness but also in its strangeness. If we search our theological and exegetical traditions from the beginning of the second until almost the middle of the twentieth centuries, where can we find resources to put those first two terms, Church and Israel, together, side by side, and with such a conjunction between them? In the light of that long tradition, it is hardly self-evident that those two terms should ever be so related. On the other hand, if we think we should connect them in this way today, let us be fully aware that we are doing something radically different from the Reformation as well as from the Catholic traditions. But if we think we have grounds to make that radical departure, how can we use a conjunction of addition and keep the order of our title? Was it not the Church that was added to Israel? We have strange work to do here if we mean seriously to speak of the Church *and* Israel.

As if that were not enough to occupy us for three days, we are also confronted with that strange text, Romans 9-11, with its illusive concerns, mixed metaphors and flat self-contradictions, a text which positively invites that utter lack of scholarly consensus with which it is burdened. How are we to decide what it was that caused Paul the sorrow and anguish of which he speaks in the opening verse, when he himself never tells us? And do we rest with the long exegetical tradition and translate *pistis* as "faith," or do we break with that tradition and follow the rather recent and quite different translation, "faithfulness?" How do we decide what Paul really meant, when he said in 11:14 that he, Paul, hoped to save some Jews, and then asserted his conviction, eleven verses later, that God would save them all? I am concerned not so much with whether we can agree on such matters, as with whether we can even agree on what would have to be the case in order for us to come to an agreement.

Finally, and this is to me the strangest part of the agenda before us: What are we to do with the colon? That is surely the greatest puzzle before us. For if we today think that we do well to connect in some way the Church

and Israel with a conjunction of addition, then what does this have to do with Romans 9-11? If the text is thought somehow to require such a conjunction, then should our title not read, "Romans 9-11: the Church and Israel," instead of the reverse? And if any of us does think that the text requires that conjunction, then how are we to explain the fact that it took nineteen centuries for anyone to see this? Has the Church misread this text all that time?

Or could it be that our title has the order right? Might the title not confront us with the fact that it is our quite recent concern about the Church and Israel that is forcing us to read this text, and then perhaps also every other text, in a new way? Would that not then mean a radical revision of how we, especially in the Reformed tradition, are to understand the relationship between the linguistic community of faith and its holy writ? How vast and how passing strange is the agenda placed before us!

By way of opening our conversation, then, I shall explore all too briefly these three problems. Although my intention in what follows is to address them for the sake of the whole Church, it will be evident that I can only speak as a particular theologian. The three problems, then, are, as I see them, 1) our quite recent concern as Christians with our relationship to the Jewish people; 2) Paul's concern with the first-century Jewish problem of the relationship between Israel's God and the Gentiles; and 3) whether we can learn anything from a conversation with Paul about our responsibility in handling our sacred Scripture.

I. The Church and Israel

From about the middle of the second century at the latest, the Church seems to have been well on the way to an understanding of itself as the direct and proper heir of all that was ancient Israel and so of the name as well. The RSV, by treating the *kai* of Gal. 6:16 as superfluous, would have us believe that this understanding goes back to Paul, which I doubt. When we get to Justin Martyr, however, the Church *is* Israel. Centuries later, Calvin put it the other way round and spoke of ancient Israel as the Church, but the result was the same. There is one unbroken line of God's people, from Abraham to the Church today. The Jewish people, who have always understood themselves to be Israel, are simply wrong.

May I add, parenthetically, that you may spare yourself the effort of checking Calvin out for a more helpful sign. Suffice it to say that with 125 references to one part or another of Romans 9-11 in his *Institutio*, there is not one to verses 24 through 28 of Romans 11, where an interpreter would

be hard pressed not to say something positive about the relationship between Israel *post mortem Christi* and God. One of my most careful graduate students did a fine dissertation on Calvin's many references to Jews and to Israel, which argued that the Reformer had apparently no interest in saying anything at all about post-biblical Jews. Instead, he referred to both biblical and post-biblical Jews as didactic models in the service of his overriding pastoral concern to steer his community safely between the Scylla and Charybdis of Romanists on one side and Anabaptists on the other, the real threats, as he saw it, to a right understanding of the Christian way of being religious.[1]

If there had been any way in which to have put the Church and continuing, actual Israel side by side, then it would have been with the Church as the right and Israel as a false answer, Israel as the question to which the Church was the answer, or the Church as the solution for Israel as the problem. The expression "The Church and Israel," had it been used, would have had the grammatical form of such an expression as "The Church and Slavery." By the 1930s it had come to take the form of "The Church and the Jewish Question," and by the middle of this century it had become "The Church and Antisemitism." This is now more usually generalized into "The Church and Racism." All this is a reflection of that longest period of our history which I have called that of *the Church against Israel*, in contrast with that very short earlier period, already nearing its end when Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, which I have called that of *the Church within Israel*.

Since the 1940s, the expression "The Church and Israel" began to be heard. This was due primarily to the work of Karl Barth. What he wrote about the Jewish people horrifies many of us today, but his radical break with the past cannot be denied: against the weight of the whole tradition, Barth insisted that the Jewish people today are Israel, as Jews themselves have always said. He knew few Jews and almost none of their literature, so he still saw them as the people of what he called the Old Testament, but he did see them as the people and Israel of God. For all his shortcomings, Barth taught us to say "the Church and Israel" and thus contributed importantly in ushering us into what may become the third great period of the Church's history, one that may come to be called that of *the Church with and for Israel*.

Since about the 1970s, statements[2] by increasing numbers of ecclesiastical

[1] Mary Sweetland Laver, *Calvin, Jews, and Intra-Christian Polemics* (Temple University dissertation, 1987).

[2] Many of these, up through that of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), have been collected in the WCC publication *The Theology of the Churches and the Jewish People* (1988).

bodies show that the churches have been moving towards ever clearer enunciation of the conviction that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is valid to this day. With this development, it becomes possible to think of the conjunction in the title of this Symposium as properly additive and so perhaps calling for a reversal of the terms: first comes continuing, living Israel, and then, added to it, the Church.

This one hundred and eighty degree turn in the Church's understanding of its historically and theologically "significant other" has consequences for the Church's self-understanding that are only beginning to be explored, much less appreciated. If there is going to be even minimal coherence in Christian thought and teaching after this change, then fresh thinking will have to be exercised in at least our ecclesiology and in our theology (in the strict use of the term). If the Jewish people is Israel, then the Church will be seen as a community of Gentiles (predominantly), who have been called to love and serve the God of Israel. A Church that can say "Israel and the Church" will know itself as the gathering of Gentiles who have been claimed by the love with which God made the covenant of Sinai with the Jewish people. With some such self-understanding, we come for the first time since the first century within reach of entering into conversation with the Jewish Apostle to the Gentiles who wrote Romans 9-11.

More fundamentally, we are led to the awareness that our distinctively Christian confession of God as triune is precisely our only appropriately Gentile way of naming the Holy One of Israel, namely, as the One God who as Spirit has called us Gentiles into God's service in and through the Jew Jesus. The God whom Israel knows directly as Father is known to us, because God has acted and so shown God's self to us, as Father, Son and Spirit. That is our appropriately Gentile way to confess the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Sinai, because that is how this one God has laid claim upon us.

This growing awareness, that the Church cannot be in relationship to the God of Israel without at the same time being in relationship with the Israel of God, has come about, as well as I can understand it, because of the impact of Jews upon the Christian consciousness. The horror of the *Shoah* and even more the founding and existence of the Jewish State have been causal factors, but the growing self-confidence of Jews to stand up and be counted as Jews, especially here in pluralistic America, has to my mind been even more influential. Whatever the causes, the fact is that more and more Christians appear to be entering into conversations with Jews as Jews in a way quite

different from the past. Israel is making itself known to us as a present reality, not simply as a feature of our distant past.

The consequence is that we find ourselves in a new situation, one in which it is becoming increasingly more difficult to speak of the Church without also speaking of the Jewish people. This puts a new "and" into our view of reality. In the face of concerns expressed in such phrases as "the Church and the University," "the Church and the Public Square," "the Church and World Religions," and the one that is more basic than all of these, "the Church and the Women's Movement," we now have "the Gentile Church and Jewish Israel." I think this last conjunction is more basic than the others, because it is absolutely fundamental to what is to be done about all of them. Perhaps the one concerning women is of an arguably equally fundamental sort, but since these two issues are so mutually supportive, I see no sense in setting them in competition. In any case, however it may be with other "ands," the conjunction of the Gentile Church and Israel, touching so directly as it does upon the character and electing will of God, is at the very heart of the Church's life. With this conjunction having come upon the scene, the Church faces a new situation calling for fresh thinking in all areas. Not the least of these is that of the relationship of the Church to its own past, and especially to its Scriptures, including chapters nine through eleven of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, to which I now turn.

II. Romans 9-11

Turn we must from our own concerns if we are to attend to this strange text. It is not perhaps the happiest text in conversation with which to think out our present problem, but it has come to be thought important and is in any case placed on our agenda by the title of this Symposium. We can say of it, however, that we know one thing for certain: its author was a Jew, and that is something of which we cannot be sure when it comes to any of the authors of the other documents that make up the Church's canon of its Apostolic Writings, the so-called New Testament. Whatever else can be said of Paul, it can be said with certainty that he was a Jew, that he saw himself as a Jew and was proud to be one, and that it seems most unlikely that any of those who knew him would have thought of him as anything but a Jew. The greatest hurdle that we must overcome if we would understand him is not that we are of the twentieth century and he was of the first, but that we are Gentiles and he was a Jew.

He was of course an unusual Jew. There is evidence to think that he shared with his Master the probably minority status of being of the Pharisaic

persuasion, but what made him truly unusual was the fact that he bore, so he was convinced, a special commission. He had, he was convinced, and we have every reason to hope that he was right, a prophetic calling from God to proclaim Christ to the Gentiles, to be an Apostle to the Gentiles. And that brings us face to face with Paul's problem, so different from ours. Paul's problem, causing him so much pain (and here I find Gaston more persuasive than Sanders[3]), was that most of his fellow Jews not only did not share his commission, but, if aware of it at all, they doubted its authenticity. One could say that his problem was an all-too-typical one of a Jewish prophet. As it had been for an Amos and a Jeremiah, so it was for Paul: his word was not heard by most of his fellow Jews as the Word of God.

Paul's gospel was that a new day had dawned, in which God had opened a way to bring the Gentiles into God's great story as "fellow citizens with the holy people," as one of Paul's disciples was to put it. As a Jew, Paul seems to have been quite comfortable with that classic Jewish division of the world into Jews and all the rest, all the rest being the *Goyim*. It is a dangerous distinction, full of problems, but Paul being a Jew, used it. God's covenant was with Israel, the Jewish people, and God's *Torah* defined how that covenant was to be lived by them. But the *Torah* was more than that: it was that according to which the world had been made and so it ruled also over the world of the *Goyim*, over all the seventy nations of the world who had been offered the *Torah* in a convenantal context and had refused it, according to an old Midrash. For the Gentiles, the extra-covenantal rule of *Torah* was a curse, a harsh *paidagogos*, from which God was freeing them through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. That was the good news of this very Jewish Apostle to the Gentiles.

During the long period of "the Church against Israel," the Church, including its biblical scholars and theologians, chose to ignore the fact that Paul was a Jew. As a result, it could not see that Paul was addressing a strictly Jewish conception of the problem of the Gentiles. It could not see that apart from Paul's Jewish division of the world into Jew and Gentile, and his Jewish conception of the rule of *Torah* over all creation—covenantally and therefore graciously over Israel, harshly and as a curse over the Gentiles—his gospel hardly makes sense. So it gave him another gospel, one that could be worked out in abstraction from his Jewishness. The result was that the proclaimer of God's solution to a Jewish problem about the Gentile problem was turned into the preacher of God's solution to what came to be

[3] L. Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: Univ. of British Columbia Press, 1987). E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

a typically Augustinian problem about bondage to sins. That was a wonderful Gospel for a Church against Israel. It is hopelessly inadequate for a Church that wants to be the Church with and for Israel.

On behalf of such a Church, willing to learn from Jews what it is to be a Jew and what their tradition can tell us about what it may have been like to have been the sort of Jew that Paul was, let us now turn more specifically to the text before us, at least in broad outline. I offer in what follows a reading or interpretation of the text that is possible and might be helpful for such a Church. Paul had great sorrow and unceasing anguish about his fellow Jews. Why? Because, so the Church has said, they did not accept the gospel. But that is a misleading generalization. What bothered Paul was that they did not accept *his* gospel, the one about God's solution to the Jewishly conceived problem of the Gentiles. What they could not accept was God's freedom to commission Paul to call the Gentiles into just that same love of the one God that Israel enjoyed. God's freedom to claim the Gentiles too, which Paul was sure was promised in Israel's own *Torah*, and so God's freedom to grant freedom also to the Gentiles, was what they rejected, and Paul had on his back one hundred and ninety-five scars, five times the thirty-nine lashes, as a reminder of the fact. So Paul devotes almost the whole of our ninth chapter to nothing but the praise of God's utter freedom to love whom he will, to call whom he will, not only his people Israel, but also those who were not his people, the Gentiles.

And how does he conclude our chapter 9? By proclaiming that the Gentiles, who were not at all concerned about God's rightness, have now been made right with God by a faithfulness (here not further defined). As for Israel, they were indeed living the rightness that God had defined for them by *Torah*, but (if I may be allowed to use the normal dictionary translation of *éphthasen* in 9:31, rather than to use the quite special sense the dictionaries provide for this case, in order to make Augustinian sense of Paul), Israel "did not succeed in *anticipating* that *Torah*." They failed, in short, to see what had been revealed to Paul, that now was the moment in which, through the faithfulness of Christ, the long-heralded promise of *Torah*, that Abraham would become the father of many *Goyim*, was being fulfilled.

The result, Paul continued in our chapter 10, was that they failed to see that what God had done and was doing in Christ was nothing other than the *telos*, the goal, of the very *Torah* that was so graciously given to Israel, on their lips and in their heart. So if they refused to endorse Paul's gospel to the Gentiles, they were resisting their own *Torah*, from which Paul, as a good Jew, calls Moses first of all and then Isaiah as his witnesses.

That resistance, however, does not mean for a moment that the covenant between God and Israel is in danger. Our chapter 11 contains mixed metaphors and flat contradictions, but there can be no question that when all is said and done, Paul was certain of God's faithfulness to Israel. The final powerful doxology, which, as Krister Stendahl pointed out years ago, contains not a single Christological reference, leaves it entirely to God how he is to bring to fruition his love for and mercy upon both Israel and the Gentiles. What Paul is sure of is that mercy.

To be fair to Paul, we should not forget, in considering these three chapters, that the letter does not end there but, in good Jewish fashion and picking up on themes already sounded in the second and third chapters, goes on to call upon his readers to live according to that mercy shown to Israel and the nations, God's freedom calling for a corresponding freedom on their part.

A better summary of this gospel of Paul's could not be made than the one he himself provided near the end of his letter, in chapter 15, verses 8 and 9. "For I tell you," he wrote, "that Christ became a servant of the Jewish people (literally, the circumcision) to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm (the verb is to be noted) the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." There it is in one sentence. In its most concise form, that was the whole of Paul's good news.

III. The Colon

That brings us to the most difficult part of our agenda, the colon, or how we are to connect the present concern of the Gentile Church for its relationship with the Jewish people, with Paul's concern as a Jew with the relationship of the Jewish people to the inclusion of Gentiles *as Gentiles* within the covenantal love of the God of Sinai. There are difficulties enough with each of those other items. I do not expect that we are all of one mind about how the Gentile Church is to face up to its own frightful history of teaching contempt of Jews, up to and including the fact that a post-Christian pagan government could build on that teaching to murder six million of the Jewish people, the ones to whom, according to Paul's gospel, Christ became a servant so that we might join them in glorifying God. I have even less expectation that we are going to agree to the general approach to understanding Paul that I have outlined here, not to speak of agreeing about any of the details of my interpretation of chapters 9 to 11 of Romans. I expect that we shall have many difficulties on both of these items. However, I consider

these problems minor compared to the one now before us: how we relate the two together.

Let me state as clearly as I can what I take to be the great difficulty here. We come to this text, in no small part because of Paul, as Gentiles. But we come as a Gentile Church that has a long history of hounding, persecuting and even killing Jews, a history which has made the cross of Christ a symbol of hatred and oppression for Jews, to the point at which pious Jews find it blasphemous to even mention the name of Jesus in their synagogues. We Christians need to be fully aware of that past, because if we like to pretend that all that is over and does not matter, there are plenty of Jews around to remind us of our past. Memory is an important part of Jewish identity. Memory is as constituent a part of Israel's present reality as it ever was. If we Christians do not acknowledge that not-insignificant part of our past that Jews remember all too well, we should hardly expect that they will be willing to continue a conversation with such irresponsible people.

If we mean today to repent of being the "Church against Israel" and want seriously to become the "Church with and for Israel," then we should count carefully the cost of building this tower. It will take a major turning around for the huge Gentile Church to begin a new day in its relationship with little Israel, the tiny Jewish people, tiny in no small part because of our murderous past. Whether the Church is up to such a turn remains to be seen, but that is the issue before us if we want to speak seriously of the Church and Israel.

How different was the issue for Paul! He wrote for a tiny Church in the midst of a much larger Israel, an Israel of which he saw himself as a part and which he firmly believed to have been absolutely confirmed in its convenantal life by the coming of Christ and the opening to the Gentiles. He had no idea that that opening was to become a threat to Jews, that his little communities were to grow into perhaps the greatest enemy with which Israel has ever had to contend. His concern was therefore centered on Israel's acceptance of this tiny gathering of Gentiles which he and few other Jews were trying to encourage. A greater difference between our concern and Paul's is hard to imagine.

Yet the title of our Symposium asks us to connect the two together with a colon. Intentionally or not, it also implies that they should be connected in a certain order, and not the one that we might expect from an institution of the Reformed tradition. Intended or not, the order would appear to imply that our present concern for the Church and Israel will determine our reading of Romans 9-11, that this concern which is a radical novelty in the history of the Church, will lead us to read Romans 9-11, and with them all the

rest of our Scriptures, not as our ancestors did but in an appropriately novel way.

So be it: I shall accept the challenge of the order of our title and assume it is intentional, because I think, and shall now argue, that it is correct: we are being asked to begin with our present concern and then to move to the text. This order, I would suggest, is a reminder that it is as true for us as it has always been true for Israel and for the Church: new events in the life of the Church and of Israel drive us to our Scriptures and call forth a reading of them that has to be new, for this reading has to account for just those novel events. That is only to describe what goes on again and again in a living community of faith that has a Scripture which it holds to be sacred. A linguistic community of faith lives in part by constantly reinterpreting its sacred texts in the light of and for the sake of better understanding its present existence. That is what must happen if it is to continue to see its own life as a continuing part of the story which its sacred text tells. If it could no longer do that, it would have ceased to be a living community of faith. It would no longer be either the Church or, *mutatis mutandis*, Israel.

So it is that the Church finds itself face to face with the Jewish people in a way that has made Romans 9-11 a striking text for us, and not the incidental and rather unimportant text it was for the anti-Judaic Church of our long past. Now we have to wrestle with it, as Israel's story teaches us to wrestle, as with God and human beings, in full convenantal responsibility. The Jewish people, in their glorious and long tradition, not just in their sufferings, have been forcing us by their living presence to read this text, and not only this one, as our forebears never conceived of reading it. Israel's calling to be a light for the Gentiles would seem to be efficacious still.

This means that the question before us is not, as our forebears were wont to put it, what have we to learn from this text, but the more dialectical or covenantal question which takes into account how we now come to the text and which recognizes that this or any other text can only be a living Scripture for a living Church that can acknowledge the highly reciprocal relationship between sacred text and sacred community. Our question, then, becomes, what are we now to say, standing as we do in the face of living Israel and before this ancient text? I see not less than five affirmations which we are led to make.

1. First of all, we are called by this text to marvel every day at our Gentile inclusion in the Israel story that began with Abraham. It is simply not self-evident at all that we should be here, praising the God of Israel alongside of God's people, the Jews. Paul provides us with words with which to express

wonder before and praise of that unexpected milestone along God's way which was God's commission of Paul to preach Christ to the Gentiles. The wonder should never have been transformed into what we have come to know as Augustinian categories. The wonder for Paul was not that God had accepted ungodly sinners. The wonder was that God had accepted ungodly Gentiles. The miracle was not for Paul, and should never have been for the Church, that we are *simul justus et peccator*, but that we are *simil justus et paganus* or *non Iudaeus*. That is what we should never take for granted. It is the miracle of all miracles, which a follower of Paul's called the mystery hidden for ages in God (Eph. 3:9; cf. 3:4-6).

2. Next, a Church that wants seriously to repent of its anti-Judaic past will be led by this text to see something never appreciated in the past: that the abiding, trustworthy continuity of God's way is Israel and remains Israel. The great continuity reads: Israel, Jesus, and the Jewish people in their continuing history to this day. That was the original, historical context of Jesus, and that must still be the context of the living risen Lord of the Church, if he is still the real Jesus of God's real creation, and not some Gnostic invention of the Church. The novelty of Christ is to be seen within that continuity or he becomes an anomaly.

It is understandable that the Church made the fateful mistake of seeing itself, or itself as the representative of all humanity, as the context of Christ.[4] He was, after all, the center of its life and worship. So instead of seeing Jesus the Jew among his own people within God's gracious covenant with Israel, it saw him as God's universal Word in the presense of the Church, standing in for all humanity. The mystery of Christ became the mystery of God and man, abstracted from the mystery of Sinai, the covenant. The Church got lost in the logical perplexities of the two-natures doctrine because it forgot the Covenant of Sinai as the God-given framework within which to understand the relationship of Jesus to the Father and the Father to Jesus. Orthodox Christology was the product of and quite adequate for the anti-Judaic Church. For a Church that wishes to turn from its old anti-Judaic ways, however, it is simply inadequate. From Paul we can begin to learn all over again how we are to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in such a way as to give all the glory to God the Father, as Jesus himself had done. "Why do you call

[4] This paragraph is, and should not be taken as more than, a highly condensed summary of my *Christ in Context, A Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality, Part 3* (San Franscisco: Harper and Row, 1988) where these matters are developed with more of the care they deserve.

me good? No one is good but God alone" (Mk. 10:18). So "hear, O Israel,"—and O Church as well—"*Adonai* is our God, *Adonai* alone" (Deut. 6:4).

3. Third, we may be able to learn from Paul, reading him out of our present situation and so after much listening to and learning from the Jewish tradition, that the God of Sinai, who is the covenantal Father of Jesus Christ, is free enough to make room for, and to call us into, a corresponding freedom. Before such a God, we can do no less than take full responsibility for how we are to speak and act in the here and now. It is up to us to decide what we are to do with our past. We are not bound by our anti-Judaic past. We are not even bound by the words of Paul, much less by the heavy layer of anti-Judaic teaching which lies over so much of the Apostolic Writings, the so-called New Testament. To hide behind such shibboleths as "grace alone" or the fear of synergism is to deny the freedom to which the God of Sinai, the covenantal God of Israel, is free enough to invite us.

4. Fourth, this text, as we may now read it, surely calls us to affirm and rejoice in our calling to serve the God of Israel, not as Israel, not as Jews, but as Gentiles. That means that imitating Jewish practices is not God's way for us. It means that the way of *Torah* is God's way for them, not for us, and so we must use all our inventiveness, as well as all the attentiveness to the Spirit that we can muster, to find out responsible ways in which, as Gentiles, to follow the Jew Jesus in the service and praise of the God of Israel. That might mean, among other things, a serious renewed attention to what was once called the discipline of the Christian life and which now lies in shambles.

5. Finally, Paul could help us to affirm the *sola scriptura* which he himself affirmed, the Scriptures of Israel, and so to learn to read and interpret our so-called New Testament writings always in the light of and with reference to the Scriptures which fed Paul, not to speak of his Lord and ours. This is of course a reversal of order and method from that of the anti-Judaic Church; but who ever thought that there could be repentence that stopped short of our handling of the Bible?

It may be noted in its favor, that an affirmation of the priority of what we used to call the Old Testament rescues us from a particularly Protestant embarrassment. Anyone even mildly touched by critical historical thinking will be aware that the line that the Reformers sought to draw between the Church's own Scripture of apostolic witness on the one hand, and the Church's tradition on the other, has been dissolved by the evidence that so much in the New Testament is part of the developing tradition of the increasingly anti-Judaic Church of the late first and early second century.

With such books of Scripture as the Catholic and Pastoral Epistles, not to speak of Acts or the final edited form of the Gospels, clearly part of the developing tradition, where are we to find "the Scriptures" before which the anti-Judaic tradition can be held to account and with the help of which it might be reformed?

The answer to this problem is simple: the Scriptures of Israel, the Scriptures of Jesus and Paul, can serve the Church as a possible canon by which to measure and control the anti-Judaic virus that infects its Apostolic Writings. In the unsatisfactory but traditional terminology, the hermeneutical rule could be given that in the witness of the New Testament that which does not comport with and confirm (Paul's favorite term) the witness of the Old Testament, is to be treated with the utmost circumspection, is indeed to be regarded primarily as grounds for repentence rather than the basis of proclamation. It must be added, however, that were the Church to turn to the Scriptures with the same wooden submission that has all too often characterized its reading of its Apostolic Writings, it is to be doubted that much would be gained. A community that is alive will live in part through a living and open argument with its sacred writ.

IV. Conclusion

The sum of these introductory reflections amounts to the unavoidable conclusion that the agenda placed before us by the title of this symposium is moral, through and through. It is also theological and exegetical, and that is because it is primarily and overwhelmingly a moral issue. At stake is the moral integrity of the Church. To put it unceremoniously but exactly, we are being challenged today to give an account of how we, as moral human beings, can dare to remain Christians. To continue to identify ourselves with the anti-Judaic tradition of this religion of hate and murder can only be morally defensible for those who set out to leave no stone unturned in digging out the source of that hate and in working unstintingly to convert the Church into what, from the late first until the mid-twentieth century, it was not: a community of the God of Israel dedicated to standing in loving support alongside of the Israel of God.

A Church with as long and consistent a tradition as ours will not be changed overnight. It will take decades if not centuries to turn it around. The task is the more complex because we dare not deny that that tradition is ours, that we must own the past as our own as well as own up to it. Without the Church of the past, none of us would be here now. On the other hand, if we do not try to change direction and set out on a new way

to be *ecclesia semper reformanda*, then the evil work of the past will come back to haunt us and our children in the future. More seriously, we will be caught in the faithless and disobedient act of standing unrepentent before the God and Father of our Lord, working against God by working against God's Israel. If we dc not change our direction, then we can hardly expect that anything else we undertake can possibly succeed.

The issue before us, then, is no less than that of the obedience and faithfulness, and so of the existence, of the Church of God. We stand today before a call to reformation compared to which the issues of the sixteenth century strike me as relatively superficial. The Reformers of the sixteenth century evidently felt that they could do their work without having to rethink the doctrine of God, Christology or the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek parts of the Bible. There is no way in which we can get off so lightly. They thought that they could identify, and identify with, an early, purer time of the Church. We have learned to our pain that the deadly virus that has caused so much Jewish blood to be spilled was there already in the young Church, that it was evidently already at work in Paul's time, as his warning in Romans 11:18 shows. If there is to be a reformation of the anti-Judaic Church, we shall have to dig far deeper and rebuild with far more care than did the Reformers of the sixteenth century. I trust that I need no more than allude to the fact, well beyond but not unrelated to our immediate agenda, that many more than Jews have suffered from our Christian sickness of imperialistic superiority.

So here we are, before the reality expressed in the phrase, "The Church and Israel," before the text of "Romans 9 to 11," and above all before the colon which has been placed between them. That is a tall order, a task to which we might justifiably paraphrase the saying of the Rabbis (*Pirke Avoth*) concerning the study of the Talmud: it is not our duty to complete the work, not in our lifetime, and certainly not in three days, but we are not at liberty, *coram deo*, to neglect it. Indeed, we dare not delay in turning our hands to this task.

"All Israel Will be Saved": Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9-11*

by Otfried Hofius

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I

At the center of Pauline theology and proclamation is the doctrine of the justification of the ungodly through the saving work of God in Jesus Christ.[1] The apostle's Christology and soteriology necessarily led him to develop this doctrine; it is the theologically consistent outgrowth of his Christology and soteriology. It is articulated as such most forcibly in Galatians and Romans in particular.[2] Paul borrows the terminology characteristic of his doctrine of justification from the Old Testament. The word δικαιοσύνη is used as a soteriological term in Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah as well as the Psalms, where it designates the *salvation* which God grants to the unsaved by initiating new life in fellowship with God as a result of his redemptive intervention.[3] In the light of the fact that *God* is the one who accomplishes and gives salvation the texts speak of the δικαιοσύνη *of God*.[4] Further, in the light of the fact that *humans* receive this salvation which is fundamentally determinative for their being the texts speak of the δικαιοσύνη *of the ones* who have experienced God's saving help.[5] Paul makes use of precisely this soteriological language: for him also δικαιοσύνη is an expression for the salvation that God both prepares and grants and that characterizes the very being of the person who receives salvation as God's gift of redemption.[6] In correspondence to the substantive, the verb δικαιοῦν means in the ac-

* For the translation of my paper I cordially thank my colleague Dr. Judith Gundry Volf.

[1] On Paul's doctrine of justification and its Old Testament background, see my article, " 'Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen' als Thema biblischer Theologie," *JBTh* 2 (1987): 79-105; now in O. Hofius, *Paulusstudien*, WUNT 51 (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1989), pp. 121-147.

[2] In addition, see 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 6:11; 2 Cor. 2:14-4:6; 5:14-21; Phil. 3:3-11. I cannot see any material/theological differences between Galatians and Romans. The differences here concern only the style and manner of argumentation.

[3] The following Septuagintal references are especially worthy of mention: Is. 46:12f.; 51:5f., 8; 61:11; 62:1f.; Ps. 22(21):32; 98(97):2.

[4] Is. 46:13; 51:5f., 8; Ps. 22(21):32; 98(97):2. In MT see also Is. 56:1b.

[5] Is. 62:2; in MT also 54:17; 62:1.

[6] Rom. 1:17; 3:21f., 25f.; 4:3, 5f., 9, 11, 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 8:10; 9:30f.; 10:3-6, 10; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 3:9; 5:21; Gal. 2:21; 3:6, 21; 5:5; Phil. 3:9. The soteriological meaning comes out clearly in Rom. 1:16f. and 10:10, where δικαιοσύνη and σωτηρία appear side by side.

tive, "grant salvation"/"give salvation,"[7] and in the passive, "receive salvation"/"gain salvation."[8] Lastly, the adjective δίκαιος characterizes the human being as the "beneficiary of salvation."[9]

When the δικαιοσύνη of God comes up at the center of Paul's theology and proclamation, as Romans shows it is most emphatically placed in the framework of the eschatological judgment in which divine wrath "will be revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."[10] In the first main section of the epistle Paul states unmistakably that *all* humanity will be subject to this judgment and that *none* will be found innocent in it (1:18-3:20). Since Adam and thanks to Adam *all* people without exception, whether Jews or Gentiles, are inescapably fallen in sin. They are fallen not only in their evil *deeds* but in their entirety, in their very *being*, which is estranged from God and opposed to God.[11] They are ἀσεβεῖς—the "ungodly," who face the accusation of God himself in the words of scripture:

> There is none righteous,
> not even one;
> There is none who understands,
> there is none who seeks for God;
> All have turned aside,
> together they have become useless;
> There is none who does good,
> there is not even one . . .[12]

With these words scripture inexorably discloses that before God the Judge *everyone*, Jew or Gentile, is *ungodly*, totally without salvation and thus from the human perspective lost beyond hope in the future judgment.[13]

God came to the aid of this human being lost in sin by intervening re-

[7] Rom. 3:26, 30; 4:5; 8:30; Gal. 3:8. The subject in each case is the God who creates and grants salvation.

[8] Rom. 3:20, 24, 28; 4:2; 5:1, 9; Gal. 2:16f.; 3:11, 24; 5:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; cf. in the LXX Is. 45:25. The subject in each case is the human being needing or receiving salvation.

[9] Rom. 1:17; 5:19; Gal. 3:11; cf. in the LXX Is. 54:17; 60:21. In Rom. 3:26 δίκαιος ascribed to God means "salvation–creating;" in that regard cf. in the LXX Ps. 116(114):5; Is. 45:21.

[10] Rom. 1:18. H. J. Eckstein argues convincingly for the *future* sense of the present ἀποκαλύπτεται in his article " 'Denn Gottes Zorn wird vom Himmel her offenbar werden.' Exegetische Erwägungen zu Röm. 1:18," *ZNW* 78 (1987):74-89. On ὀργὴ Θεοῦ as an expression for the eschatological outpouring of divine wrath, cf. Rom. 2:5; 3:5; 5:9; 12:19; 1 Thess. 1:10.

[11] In this regard, see Rom. 5:12-21; 7:7-25a; also 3:23; 8:6f.

[12] Rom. 3:10b, 11f.; cf. Qoh 7:20; Ps. 14(13):2f.

[13] See Rom. 3:9 Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας πάντας ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι. This statement is to be understood in a universal sense, as the one in 3:19: ὑπόδικος . . . πᾶς ὁ κόσμος τῷ Θεῷ.

demptively in Jesus Christ and so proved himself to be "the one who gives salvation to the *ungodly*."[14] *That* is the principal claim of the second main section of Romans (3:21-4:25), which claim is developed further and in greater detail in the third main section (5:1-8:39). Referring to God's accomplishment and appropriation of salvation for the ungodly out of pure grace[15] Paul speaks about the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ. He differentiates between the "demonstration" of δικαιοσύνη and its "revelation."[16] The "demonstration" of δικαιοσύνη occurs in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection: in this event of sanctifying atonement God reconciled sinners to himself and in this way delivered them from sin and damnation.[17] The "revelation" of the δικαιοσύνη of God occurs in the gospel of Jesus Christ through which God himself makes known and appropriates to human beings the salvation accomplished in Christ.[18] The proclaimed gospel is "the power of God for salvation to every one who believes," as Paul formulates in Rom 1:16. That is, God's own word as such, which has power to effect what it intends, creates the faith which takes hold of salvation.[19] Faith in Jesus Christ[20] is the divinely intended *mode* of reception of and participation in salvation. And for that reason Paul also calls the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ the δικαιοσύνη πίστεως[21] or the ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη.[22] The believer, who owes his/her new being to God alone, is δίκαιος, or a beneficiary of salvation, in faith. And this gift of δικαιοσύνη firmly guarantees the believer acquittal unto salvation in the last judgment[23] and participation in eternal life.[24]

[14] Rom. 4:5: ὁ δικαιῶν τὸν ἀσεβῆ. Cf. 5:6: Χριστὸς . . . ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν.

[15] Rom. 1:17; 3:21f., 25f.; 10:3; 2 Cor. 5:21.

[16] For a close examination of this differentiation, see O. Hofius, "Wort Gottes und Glaube bei Paulus," *Paulusstudien* (see n. 1 above), 148-174.

[17] Rom. 3:24-26. For a lengthy treatment of this matter, see O. Hofius, "Sühne und Versöhnung. Zum paulinischen Verständnis des Kreuzestodes Jesu," *Paulusstudien*, 33-49.

[18] Rom. 1:16f.; 3:21f.

[19] In this regard, see Hofius, "Wort Gottes und Glaube bei Paulus," *Paulusstudien* (see n. 16 above), 157ff.

[20] For the notion of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and similar formulations, see Rom. 3:22, 26; Gal. 2:16, 20; 3:22; Phil. 3:9. It is beyond the shadow of a doubt that in all these texts we have a genitivus *objectivus* ("faith *in* Jesus Christ") and not, say, a genitivus *subjectivus* ("faith of Jesus Christ"). M. D. Hooker has recently argued for a genitivus subjectivus again (ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ, *NTS* 35 [1989]:321-342). This interpretation is already shown to be untenable, however, by Gal. 2:16: Paul reformulates the phrase διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in the succeeding statement εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν.

[21] Rom. 4:11a, 13.

[22] Rom. 9:30; 10:6; cf. Phil. 3:9: ἡ διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ δικαιοσύνη.

[23] Rom. 5:1f., 9. For this idea, see also Rom. 8:31ff.

[24] Rom. 1:17/Gal. 3:11: ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται. The statement should be translated as follows: "The one who is righteous (i.e., the beneficiary of salvation) by faith will have life."

The three fundamental assertions of Paul—that divine salvation in Jesus Christ, i.e., through his death and resurrection, has become a reality, that this salvation is announced and disclosed in the preached gospel of Jesus Christ, and that human beings receive salvation in faith in Jesus Christ which is effected by the gospel—these three fundamental assertions are true in a strictly *exclusive* sense. The apostle is therefore speaking axiomatically when he explains in Galatians, and no less clearly in Romans, that *no one* attains salvation "through the Torah" (ἐν νόμῳ) or "on the basis of observance of the Torah" (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου).[25] By denying the Torah from Sinai any *soteriological* relevance in this way Paul does not at all disparage the law of God; on the contrary, the reason for his negation is the utter seriousness with which he takes the holiness of the Torah and thus also its demands.[26] The Torah from Sinai testifies authoritatively as God's holy word to the judicial will of God and—as Paul greatly stresses, appealing to Lev. 18:5 and Deut. 27:26[27]—is emphatically and exclusively interested in the *deeds* of men and women. The underlying principle of the Torah is that "the *doers* of the law will attain salvation" (Rom. 2:13). For "Moses writes concerning the salvation [sought] on the basis of the Torah: '[Only] the one who *does* them [the regulations and statutes of the Torah[28]] shall live[29] through them [i.e., by having followed them]' (Lev. 18:5)" (Rom. 10:5). But who *is* a ποιητὴς νόμου, a "doer of the law"? Paul would answer together with the Targum of Isaiah that a "doer of the law" is a "righteous one," one who "has not sinned" and "has kept the Torah with a perfect heart"[30]—one who

[25] Gal. 3:11: ἐν νόμῳ οὐδεὶς δικαιοῦται παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ (ἐν νόμῳ, which is adverbial to δικαιοῦται, is to be taken instrumentally—just as ἐν αὐτοῖς, v. 12); Gal. 2:16: οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου; Rom. 3:20: ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ (sc. τοῦ Θεοῦ). The expression ἔργα νόμου (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10), which Paul can also shorten to the mere ἔργα (Rom. 4:2, 6; 9:12, 32; 11:6), corresponds to the Hebrew *mʿśj twrh* (4QFlor 1:7) or *mʿśj htwrh* (4QMMT 21[?]:3). Not the individual "acts of obedience to the commandments" is meant (as most of the commentaries state, following Str-B III 160f.), but obedience to the Torah as such, observance of the Torah in the most comprehensive sense.

[26] On Paul's understanding of the law, see my two articles: "Das Gesetz des Mose und das Gesetz Christi," *ZTK* 80 (1983): 262-286 = Hofius, *Paulusstudien* (see n. 1 above), 50-74; "Gesetz und Evangelium nach 2. Korinther 3," *Paulusstudien*, 75-120. See also the brief but conceptually precise observations by H.-J. Eckstein, " 'Nahe ist dir das Wort.' Exegetische Erwägungen zu Röm. 10:8," *ZNW* 79 (1988):204-220:204ff.

[27] In this regard, see Rom. 10:5 and Gal. 3:10, 12.

[28] The pronoun αὐτά refers to "all" God's προστάγματα and κρίματα which the Torah commands to keep by *doing* them; see Lev. 18:4f. LXX.

[29] Paul interprets ζήσεται from Lev. 18:5 LXX to refer to *eternal* life, i.e., participation in the full salvation of God. The same interpretation is found in *Tg. Onq.* Lev. 18:5; *Tg. Ps.-J.* Lev. 18:5; *Sipra, ʿhrj mwt* IX 12 *ad loc.*

[30] *Tg. Jon.* Is. 7:3; 10:21f.; 26:2 33:13; 57:2, 19. The Aramaic expression which corresponds to οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου (Rom. 2:13) is *ʿbdj 'wrjt'* in *Tg. Jon.* Is. 4:2; 9:6; 13:12; 31:9; 38:17;

is seen to be "holy" in the light of the Torah and who therefore is "written down" with God "for eternal life."[31] As Paul sees it, however, by no means is there such a person who is "righteous" and "holy" and thus a "doer of the law." Indeed, even in principle there cannot be such a person, for every human being comes from Adam and always has, and no one can begin before Adam.[32] The Torah has universally to do with the ungodly, the human being who is completely fallen under sin and incapable of obeying, who is fundamentally unable to satisfy the demands of the holy law of God. The light of the "holy" and "spiritual" Torah thus makes manifest the utterly "unholy" and "fleshly" being of humankind—of *each* human being![33] This human being who fails to render the total obedience demanded by God can only be accused and put under the divine sentence of condemnation by the Torah. It is the Torah itself which pronounces the fatal curse on the ungodly and lawbreakers in Deut. 27:26: "Cursed is every one who does not *abide* by *all* things [commands] written in the book of the Law by *doing* them."[34] Since the Torah—precisely according to its self-witness!—cannot grant salvation to the ungodly nor give life to the sinner, it is fundamentally impossible according to Paul for anyone to gain salvation by observance of the Torah.

II

The Pauline doctrine of justification, whose central claims and most important implications we were able only to sketch in brief, forms the background against which the exposition of Romans 9-11 is to be viewed and understood.[35] These three chapters form the fourth main section of Romans and, being integrally connected to what was said in Romans 1-8, also revolve around the theme of the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ. The occasion for the statements made in these chapters is the fact that the vast majority of Israel has resisted the gospel of Jesus Christ and thereby also the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ and in-

42:21; 53:10; 57:2, etc. (cf. 1:27; 4:3). Contrasting expressions are *rš'j'*, "ungodly" (1:24, 31; 5:20; 13:11; 38:17; 42:19, etc.), *hjjbjn*, "sinner" (1:28, etc.), *mrwdjn*, "rebels" = enemies of God (1:28, etc.).

[31] *Tg. Jon.* Is. 4:2f.

[32] Rom. 5:12ff.; 7:7ff.

[33] See esp. Rom. 7:14 in the context of 7:7-25a.

[34] Thus Paul's quotation of Deut. 27:26 at Gal 3:10. Paul puts strong emphasis on the word ποιῆσαι but also ἐμμένει and πᾶσιν. J. A. Bengel makes the following correct observation on this verse: "Requiritur obedientia perfecta (*in omnibus*) et perpetua (*permanet*). Hanc nemo praestat" (*Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, Tübingen ³1773, *ad loc.*). Cf. also Gal. 5:3.

[35] I have already commented on Romans 9-11 in the following article which overlaps in part with the material below: "Das Evangelium und Israel. Erwägungen zu Römer 9-11," *ZTK* 83 (1986):297-324 = *Paulusstudien*, 175-202.

stead pursues salvation where it is not to be found, according to Paul: in the νόμος, the Torah from Sinai. The apostle speaks directly to this matter in 9:30-32a, where he juxtaposes Israel (vv. 31, 32a) and the Gentiles (v. 30) who have come to faith in Jesus Christ through the preaching of the gospel. The two sides of the comparison are structured in tightly parallel fashion. Paul begins each with a statement about the pursuit of salvation (A), then adds an observation on the attainment of salvation (B), and finally gives a ground[36] for this observation (C):

30ΕΘΝΗ
A τὰ μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην
B κατέλαβεν δικαιοσύνην,
C δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ πίστεως.

31ΙΣΡΑΗΛ δὲ
A διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης
B εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν·
C 32διὰ τί;
ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἀλλ' ὡς ἐξ ἔργων.

First Paul asserts in v. 30 that "Gentiles, who did *not* pursue salvation,[37] attained salvation."[38] The reason for their attainment is given in the words δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ πίστεως: they attained salvation in the only way it can be won: "by faith," i.e., as the free gift of God's grace granted unconditionally to the ungodly completely apart from their deserts.[39] The grammatical construction applied in the statement about Israel (vv. 31, 32a), which forms the antithesis to v. 30, makes it especially stand out. In v. 31 Paul does not say Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διώκων δικαιοσύνην εἰς δικαιοσύνην οὐκ ἔφθασεν, though this is exactly what he means. Rather he fully intentionally formulates in such a way that the term designating the *problem* of Israel appears twice, the term νόμος. Paul uses the rhetorical device of hypallage in the expression διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνς, as already John Calvin ob-

[36] The ground is introduced by the explicative δέ in v. 30, and in vv. 31f. by διὰ τί, which inquires after the ground.

[37] Compare διώκειν δικαιοσύνην with οἱ διώκοντες τὸ δίκαιον ("you who pursue salvation"), Is. 51:1.

[38] For a parallel, see Rom. 10:20, where Is. 65:1 is applied to the Gentiles—in contrast to the original meaning: "I was found by those who did *not* seek me; I became known to those who did *not* inquire after me."

[39] Cf. Rom. 3:24 (δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι). Paul's statement in Rom. 9:30 is misinterpreted when understood to mean that the Gentiles attained salvation *because* they believed—in contrast to Israel.

served correctly.[40] In actuality we have here two points compressed together and expressed as a single statement: (a) Israel—in contrast to the Gentiles—pursues salvation (διώκων δικαιοσύνην);[41] (b) Israel tries to attain salvation by earnestly attempting to follow the Torah (διώκων νόμον).[42] Thus Theodoret of Cyrus is correct when he paraphrases διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης with the words τὸν νόμον κατέχων καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μεταδιώκων.[43] In order to understand the next statement—εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν—in the right way it is important to note that in Paul φθάνειν εἰς is synonymous with καταλαμβάνειν[44] and that νόμος here is metonymical for that which is sought from the law, i.e., νόμος stands for δικαιοσύνη. V. 31b therefore asserts that Israel did *not* attain what it sought from the Torah, or in other words what it tried to gain from the Torah by attempting to observe the Torah.[45] The reason why Israel did not attain the desired δικαιοσύνη by trying to keep the Torah is stated in the extremely terse ὅτι-clause at v. 32a: "Because [it sought to attain δικαιοσύνη] not by faith, but [,proceding from a mistaken assumption,] as if [it could be attained] by observance of the Torah."[46] These words imply that Israel missed the nature and function of the Torah in that Israel took it as a *way of salvation* and thought it could gain salvation from the Torah. For Paul this fundamental misunderstanding of the Torah is the crucial problem of Israel.[47]

[40] *Ioannis Calvini in Novum Testamentum Commentarii*. Vol. V Epistola Pauli ad Romanos (ed. A. Tholuck; Berlin, [4]1864), p. 167: "Legem iustitiae per hypallagen posuisse mihi videtur pro iustitia Legis."

[41] See n. 37 above.

[42] Cf. the formulation in 2 Esdr. 9:4: πᾶς ὁ διώκων λόγον Θεοῦ Ἰσραήλ.

[43] The quotation is from Π. Ν. Τρεμπέλας, Ὑπόμνημα εἰς τὰς ἐπιστολὰς τῆς Καινῆς Διαθήκης Ι (Athens, [3]1978), p. 150.

[44] This is made obvious through a comparison of Phil. 3:16 (εἰς ὃ ἐφθάσαμεν = "what we have attained") with 3:12f. Bengel (*Gnomon, ad* Rom. 9:30f.) thus translates κατέλαβε accurately as "sunt assecuta" (v. 30), and εἰς . . . οὐκ ἔφθασεν as "non est assecutus" (v. 31).

[45] Rom. 9:31 therefore says in essence the same thing as Rom. 11:7a: ὃ ἐπιζητεῖ Ἰσραήλ, τοῦτο οὐκ ἐπέτυχεν.

[46] On the ellipsis of the verb, cf. Rom. 4:16a; 11:6a; 14:23a. On the formulation ὡς ἐξ ἔργων, see L. Radermacher, *Neutestamentliche Grammatik* (HNT 1; Tübingen, [2]1925), p. 26.

[47] It is impossible to recount and discuss in any detail here the numerous *misinterpretations* of Rom. 9:31, 32a. I will mention only the following interpretation: Israel did not attain the δικαιοσύνη which the νόμος demands or promises because Israel did not seek it in *faith*. For this view, see e.g., C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans* II (ICC; Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 508ff. He comments: "It was not the object of their pursuit which was wrong but the way in which they had pursued it" (*ibid*, 508). This interpretation is most certainly wrong, as Paul's point in Gal. 3:12 shows: The Torah has *nothing* in common with faith; the Torah requires *works*—the keeping of *all* the commandments—and nothing else! Paul does not refute this claim in Romans, rather he repeats it in the clearest way we could want in Rom. 2:13, 25 as well as Rom. 10:5 (which are materially parallel to Gal. 3:12).

The exposition of Rom. 10:1ff. will confirm that the above interpretation of Rom. 9:31, 32a is correct.[48] The Jews, who are faithful to the Torah, "have a zeal for God—but not in accordance with knowledge," we are told (v. 2). They do not recognize the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ (v. 3)—which means that they do not see that divine salvation has been accomplished in Christ's death and resurrection (vv. 6f.), that salvation comes to human beings in the word which is near, the word of the gospel (vv. 8, 14ff.), and that salvation is received only in saving faith which confesses Jesus as the Kyrios (vv. 9ff.). In other words, the Jews do not recognize that the δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ (v. 3) is exclusively ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη (v. 6) and as such cannot be attained by human deeds but only received as an undeserved gift of God. But because they do not recognize all this they seek salvation in the Torah—as ἐκ νόμου δικαιοσύνη (v. 5) and thus as ἰδία δικαιοσύνη (v. 3).[49] By ἰδία δικαιοσύνη Paul means the δικαιοσύνη which is attained by perfect obedience to the Torah, the δικαιοσύνη which is thus rightfully due the "doer of the law" on the basis of his/her obedient deeds.[50] Striving for *this* δικαιοσύνη is thus, according to Paul, striving for the absolutely impossible and unattainable. Israel, by seeking salvation "from the law," seeks that which the law was never ever able to impart to human beings living in Adam's shadow, i.e. to sinners and the ungodly. Israel's failure to recognize this dilemma becomes obvious for Paul in Israel's "no" to the gospel and the Christ present in the gospel.[51] With its "no" Israel refuses—as the apostle explains in 10:3—to recognize obediently the salvation of God. That means further that the Israel which does not believe in Christ is excluded from σωτηρία,[52] for participation in salvation is tied to faith in Jesus Christ and confession of him as the Kyrios (10:9ff.).

Now we must ask the question, does Paul speak of all these things in an

[48] In Romans 10 Paul develops what was said in 9:24-33, now putting all the emphasis on *Israel* (vv. 1-19 and v. 21) and bringing in the Gentiles for contrast only in v. 20.

[49] The meaning of ἰδία δικαιοσύνη is clear in the light of (a) the fact that the phrase in Rom. 10:3 is the counterpart to ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη, and (b) the comparison of Rom. 10:3ff. with Phil. 3:9, which shows that ἰδία δικαιοσύνη *is* the ἐκ νόμου δικαιοσύνη (10:5) and that the τοῦ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη *is* the ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη (10:6; cf. 9:30).

[50] The word ἴδιος here—as in 1 Cor. 3:8 and Acts 1:25—means "due someone," "entitled to someone." The ἰδία δικαιοσύνη would be—in the words of Rom. 4:4—the "reward" due the obedient person κατὰ ὀφείλημα. The ἐκ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη by contrast is the gift which is unmerited and can never be merited and which is granted to the ungodly (Rom. 4:5) κατὰ χάριν.

[51] Rom. 10:16: "Not all"—i.e., only very few (a litotes!)—"have heeded the gospel" in that they have "put faith in" the apostolic proclamation. Rom. 10:18-21: Israel "heard" the gospel, on the one hand, but did not "understand," on the other, rather, proved to be a "disobedient and obstinate people" in relation to the gospel. On the interpretation of v. 19a presupposed here, see Hofius, *Das Evangelium und Israel* (see n. 35 above), p. 298, n. 5, or 176, n. 5.

[52] That is the undeniable implication of Rom. 10:1 as well as 9:27; 11:14; 11:26f.

accusatory tone? That is, in Romans 9-11 does he want to point out Israel's *guilt* as consisting in its defiant and stubborn rejection of the gospel and so also its willful refusal of faith—though Israel *could* believe? It is well-known that the material in Romans 9-11 has widely been interpreted in this way and still is by exegetes today.[53] Nevertheless, we must reject this interpretation most decisively as completely false. Of course, in Romans 9-11 Paul can speak of Israel's guilt and disobedience, indeed of its "ungodliness";[54] but in his mind these are not equivalent to Israel's "no" to the gospel; rather, they bespeak the lostness which is also the lot of the Gentiles and with which Rom. 1:18-3:20 deals. Liberation from this lostness is the work of the gospel, through which God himself effects both the knowledge of the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ accomplished in Christ and faith in Jesus Christ. If therefore the vast majority of Israel fails to acknowledge the salvation of God and thus does not believe in Christ, the reason can only lie in the fact that God has not let the gospel become the saving and faith-producing δύναμις for that majority. Paul says exactly that in Rom. 9:24ff. and 11:5ff.! God himself, we read, has "hardened" Israel, with the result that it *cannot* accept salvation now realized in Christ.[55] In this regard Paul quotes the scripture: "*God* gave them a spirit of stupor—eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day."[56] This divinely ordained hardening is by no means God's answer to the unbelief of Israel. On the contrary, Israel's unbelief is the result of this very "hardening." Paul thus traces the "no" with which the majority of Israel resists the gospel to God's determination. Here it becomes obvious that, just as faith is the mode of participation in salvation, so also unbelief is the mode and form of exclusion from salvation, an exclusion from salvation which God himself brings about by leaving human beings in their lost state which characterizes all of humankind through Adam, yes, even as they are confronted with the gospel. *That* is what Paul says in Romans 9-11 concerning Israel, and he says it not in an accusatory tone but with "deep anguish."[57]

III

The reason for the apostle's anguish lies not only and not even primarily in his feelings of sympathy for his Jewish "brethren and kinspeople" (9:3).

[53] Especially common in the commentaries is the assigning to Chapter 10 of the heading, "Israel's Guilt."

[54] Rom. 11:26ff.: ἁμαρτία, v. 27; ἀπείθεια, vv. 30ff.; ἀσέβεια, v. 26.

[55] Rom. 11:7b. ἐπωρώθησαν in this verse is a passivum divinum, as the supporting scriptural quotations which follow in vv. 8ff. make clear.

[56] Rom. 11:8 = Deut. 29:3 LXX with influence from Is. 29:10 LXX.

[57] G. Maier, *Mensch und freier Wille*, WUNT 12 (Tübingen, 1971), p. 391. In Rom. 9:2 Paul speaks expressis verbis of his "great sorrow and unceasing grief."

The reason is to be found at a much deeper level, in a *theological* problem with which Paul, faced with the faith of the Gentiles and the unbelief of the Jews, is confronted by no less than the holy scripture of Israel, which Paul takes to be the valid and binding record of God's words and deeds. If, as is the case, by God's will the gospel does *not* prove for the majority of Israel to be the δύναμις Θεοῦ εἰς σωτηρίαν which effects faith, then the problem presents itself for Paul, what does this state of affairs mean in the light of the fact that according to the scriptural testimony God's saving work in Jesus Christ is "first" for the Jews.[58] The Jews have a unique advantage over the Gentiles: the gospel was "promised beforehand" to them in the scripture, which, it follows, already announced the promise of that δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ which was made manifest in Jesus Christ.[59] Paul has in mind here the promise to Abraham from Gen. 12:2f.[60] The particularly important aspect of the promise for Paul is the announcement of the divine "blessing." He interprets this "blessing" to be the δικαιοσύνη accomplished in Christ, i.e. the *justificatio impiorum sola gratia et sola fide*.[61] With the words of the Septuagint Paul attributes to the promised "blessing" the following form:[62]

> I will bless you . . . , and you will be blessed;
> I will bless your (physical) offspring,
> and all the nations will be blessed with you.[63]

The recipients of the "blessing" named in the promise are first Abraham himself, then the physical descendants of Abraham, and finally the Gentiles.[64] The announcement of the "blessing" is therefore a message of universal breadth: it encompasses the Jews *and* Gentiles, who are both to be united with Abraham, the "father of all," as blessed.[65] Nevertheless, the universality of the promise by no means nullifies the πρῶτον which is true

[58] In this regard, see Rom. 1:16 (Ἰουδαίῳ πρῶτον), also 15:8.

[59] Rom. 1:2 (cf. 3:1f.); 3:21f.

[60] That is clear both from Gal. 3:8, where Paul makes a direct quotation from Gen. 12:3b (combined with 18:18b), and also from Rom. 4:13, where he has in mind Gen. 12:2f.; 18:18; 22:17f. as well as Gen. 17:4ff. Paul is also referring to the promise made to Abraham at Rom. 3:2 in the phrase λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ. He is also thinking primarily of the promise at Rom. 9:4 when he speaks of the διαθῆκαι and ἐπαγγελίαι—the "covenantal promises" (cf. 2 Macc. 8:15; Wis. 18:22) and "promises of salvation."

[61] In this regard, see Rom. 4:13ff. (in the context of the whole chapter!), and, in greater detail, Gal. 3:6ff.

[62] This can be deduced with precision from Gal. 3:8f., 16 on the one hand, and Rom. 4:16 on the other.

[63] This is the meaning of ἐν σοί from Gen. 12:3b LXX at Gal. 3:8f.

[64] In this regard, cf. also esp. Gen. 22:17f.

[65] Paul points out emphatically the universal breadth of the promise, which includes the Gentiles, in Gal. 3:8 (cf. 3:14, 29) as also in Rom. 4:16f.

of the Jews. For, as sure as the promised "blessing" will come upon the Gentiles *too*,[66] to the same degree is it certain that in the scripture the "blessing" is announced only to Israel and thus promised and meant *first* for the physical descendants of Abraham. Now that the overwhelming majority of Israel, however, has proven to be closed to the gospel and so also to the salvation of God which was promised to Israel and has presently become a reality in Christ two questions inevitably arise. These are the questions which Paul explicitly addresses in Romans 9-11: "Has God's word—the promise made to Abraham and along with him to the σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ—failed?" (9:6a); and: "Has God rejected his people?"—the people he chose to be his possession when he elected Abraham (11:1f.).

Paul begins by treating these two questions in an extensive *first* part of his argument, which encompasses all the material from Rom. 9:6-11:10. The thesis of this part of the argument can be stated as follows: the rejection of the gospel by the majority of Israel by no means implies that God has nullified the promise made to Abraham and his descendants and has cast off his elect people Israel. Instead, the proof that God continues faithfully to stand by his promise as well as his election is found in the existence of the *Jewish Christians* won by the gospel who have received the promised "blessing"—the δικαιοσύνη—in faith in Jesus Christ. The thought expressed in Rom. 9:6b, 7a is fundamental to this thesis: "Not all who (by descent) are of Israel, are Israel; neither are all automatically children (of Abraham) because they are Abraham's descendants." These statements (which come up again in 9:8 in a parallel formulation) convey that membership in the *people of Israel* which received God's promise does not *eo ipso* imply membership in *Israel the community of salvation* which receives the fulfillment of the promise.[67] Membership in Israel the community of salvation is solely by the "call" of the God who made the promise (9:12a) and whose call goes forth again and again. This call is rooted in nothing other than the κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ Θεοῦ (9:11b), i.e. the sovereign divine decree which operates according to selection or which makes a selection. Paul shows what this means when he appeals to the scriptural testimony regarding Isaac and Ishmael (9:7b-9) on the one hand, and Jacob and Esau (9:10-13) on the other. Isaac and Jacob represent the Israelites whom God has elected and called, whereas Ishmael and Esau represent the Israelites whom God has (for now) passed over and rejected. As even the very first descendants of Abraham

[66] The nations appear throughout in Gen. 12:3b; 18:18b; 22:18; 26:4b; 28:14b.

[67] On the various uses of the term Ἰσραήλ in Rom. 9-11, see Hofius, "Das Evangelium und Israel" (see n. 35 above), p. 301, n. 15, or 179, n. 15.

illustrate, in the course of history God has always fulfilled the promise made to Abraham and his offspring in such a way as to "elect" one and "reject" the other (9:13)[68] according to his sovereign elective decree; he "had mercy" on one, but "hardened" the other (9:18).[69] In this very way the God of Israel is shown to be the one who grants salvation to the ungodly apart from "works" and out of free grace (9:12a; 11:6). That in turn means that from the very beginning Israel the community of salvation is the community of those who have received the promised "blessing" in faith while they were *ungodly*—like Abraham himself.[70] God acts in the same way in the *present*, Paul explains in 9:24ff. and 11:5ff., as God acted in the history of his people, namely, as the one who sovereignly elects and rejects. God does so *now* in that he calls only a "*remnant*" (τὸ ὑπόλειμμα, 9:27) *within* Israel to faith through the preached gospel, and lets the others "stumble" over the Christ preached in the gospel (9:32f.). And he also continues to act as the sovereignly electing and rejecting God by bringing to faith through the preaching of the gospel *Gentiles*, who are *outside* Israel and did not inquire after him, and thereby integrating them into the community of salvation (9:24-26). Paul calls the Jewish Christians won through the gospel λεῖμμα κατ' ἐκλογὴν χάριτος, the "remnant according to God's gracious choice" (11:5). They are the "elect" (ἡ ἐκλογή)[71] in contrast to the "rest" (οἱ λοιποί), who are hardened by God; they have not attained their present stance in salvation through observance of the Torah, but have received salvation as a gift exclusively through the undeserved mercy of God (11:7). The remnant, to whom indeed the apostle himself belongs, offers tangible proof for Paul that God stands by his promise and election with unswerving faithfulness.

The notion present in Rom. 9:6-11:10 that God's faithfulness to his promise and election is demonstrated by his preservation and salvation of a remnant within Israel has clear parallels in ancient Jewish literature. For example, some Qumran texts speak of a split *in* Israel on the basis of the exposition of the Torah by the Teacher of Righteousness: Israel is divided into "righteous" and "ungodly," the "holy community" and the "congre-

[68] The contrast between "love" and "hate" in 9:13 (citing Mal. 1:2f.) has this harsh sense, as ancient Jewish interpretation of Mal. 1:2f. shows: "I loved Jacob, but rejected Esau" (*Tg.* Jon. ad loc.); "segregasti tibi Iacob, Esau autem separasti" (4 Ezra 3:16).

[69] The pair of contrasting verbs in the Moses/Pharaoh passage (9:14-18), ἐλεεῖν/σκληρύνειν, corresponds to the pair in 9:13, ἀγαπᾶν/μισεῖν. The giving of examples from Israel's history continues in 11:2b-4. By contrast, 9:25-29 contains scriptural proofs for the present situation which Paul has in mind.

[70] In this regard, see Rom. 4:1ff.

[71] The expression ἐκλογή is metonymical in 11:7 (in contrast to 9:11; 11:5, 28).

gation of the ungodly."[72] There is thus within the *people of Israel* the *Israel which is the community of salvation*, whose are the promises, the eschatological community of the "remnant," the community of the "elect of God."[73] This very community of the "remnant" is—according to its self-perception—the sign and proof of the faithfulness of God to his election and to the promises made to Abraham and his offspring. As the "community of God"[74] it is the true Israel to which the salvation promised to the fathers comes and which—in contrast to the Israelites who are rejected and do not belong to the "remnant" of the "elect"—is on the way to eschatological deliverance.

IV

The notion of a "remnant" preserved by God was already present in the holy scripture,[75] and this scriptural proof enables Paul to understand why God presently calls only few Israelites to faith in Jesus Christ through the gospel. The extraordinary thing about Paul's exposition in Romans 9-11, however, is that the apostle does not close with this point and end the discussion at Rom. 11:10.[76] Instead he opens a new window on the subject by throwing out the question, what about the "rest" whom God has hardened: μὴ ἔπταισαν ἵνα πέσωσιν; "have they stumbled so that they might fall and perish?" (11:11a). Here Paul poses the question whether Israel can be *definitively* separated into those whom God elects and brings to saving faith in Jesus Christ, and those whom God hardens and lets continue in their resistance to the salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ. Scripture caused Paul to raise and enunciate this question too. Both in the course of history as well as the present God's activity of electing and rejecting, showing mercy and hardening affects *the* people who as a *whole*, according to the scripture, received the promises and election, the primary constitutive factor of its existence. The promise of "blessing" made to Abraham does *not* speak merely of a "remnant," but, much more comprehensively, of the σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ. In Rom. 9:4 Paul has thus designated the Jews who do not believe in Christ specifically as "Israelites," and emphasized that *theirs* is the υἱοθε-

[72] 1QH 2:12; 7:10, 12.

[73] 1QH 6:8; 1QpHab 10:13; 4QpPs 37 II 5, III 5. Cf. further 1QH 2:13; 14:15; 1QpHab 5:4; 1QS 8:6; CD 2:1ff.

[74] 1QS 1:8, 10.

[75] See the scripture quotations in 9:27-29 and 11:3f.

[76] At this point we see the fundamental difference between Paul's view and the view of the Qumran texts, in which the notion of the "remnant" is the *definitive* answer to the question of Israel's salvation. The final word on Israel is the salvation of the community of the "remnant"; those who do not belong to this "remnant" are definitively and irreversibly rejected.

σία—the election to be "sons of God"—and *theirs* are the "covenant promises" and the "promises of salvation" irrevocably given by God. Paul must affirm *this* truth, however, without neglecting the other scriptural truth that the electing God keeps and fulfills his promises of salvation according to his sovereign elective grace. The claim of Rom. 9:6ff. still stands: membership in the people of Israel does not *eo ipso* mean membership in Israel the community of salvation, and the physical descendants of Abraham are not as such also "children of Abraham" in the spiritual sense and therefore "children of God" and "heirs of the promise." Nevertheless, Paul fully acknowledges that God's election and rejection within Israel is *set in the broader framework* of God's election of *all* Israel and therefore that the physical descendants of Abraham are "first" with respect to the divine promise that its recipients *will be* "children of God" and "heirs of the promise."

The question of the "others" raised in v. 11a is discussed in Rom. 11:11-32, which makes up the *second* part of the argument in Romans 9-11. The main emphasis falls on these verses. In three steps (vv. 11b-15; vv. 16-24; vv. 25-32) Paul discloses that the salvation of a mere "remnant" of Israel and the hardening of the overwhelming majority of Israel is by no means God's *last* word on Israel. Paul integrates in his argument at each of its three stages two basic perspectives on the problem: for one, the matter of the divine intention behind the hardening of the majority of Israel, and for another, and more significantly, the certainty that this hardening is temporary and will come to an end.[77]

The gospel is to be preached first to the Gentiles and thus the σωτηρία and καταλλαγή brought about in Christ's death and resurrection is to be appropriated first to them[78]—therein consists the divine *intention* which God has linked to the hardening of Israel, as Paul sees it. He articulates this idea metaphorically in 11:16ff. using the figure of speech of the olive tree and the branches. The "cultivated olive tree" (vv. 17, 24) is Israel the community of salvation,[79] and its root (vv. 16-18), Abraham as bearer of the promise of salvation fulfilled in Christ.[80] Finally, the "branches" (vv. 16-21) stand for the members of the community of salvation[81] who are united with

[77] For a detailed analysis of Rom. 11:11-32, as well as fuller substantiation of the exegetical decisions presupposed in the following discussion, see my study referred to in n. 35 above, pp. 306ff., or 184ff.

[78] See esp. 11:11b, 12a, 15a, 25b, 30b.

[79] For the metaphor, cf. Jer. 11:16; Hos. 14:7; *bMenah* 53b.

[80] Cf. *Jub.* 16:26; *T. Jud.* 24:5 and esp. *1 Enoch* 93:8: Abraham is "the elect root" of the "plant of righteousness" (93:2, 5, 10), i.e., Israel the community of salvation. The common interpretation of the "root" in Rom. 11:16-18 as Israel is wrong.

[81] Cf. 1QH 6:15; 7:10.

the "blessed" Abraham as participants in salvation. As Paul explains in the metaphor, God "cut off" from the cultivated olive tree some branches as unbelieving, in order that Gentiles, who by nature are "wildlings" (vv. 17, 24), might be engrafted in the olive tree as believing.[82] The hardening of the majority of Israel thus means salvation for the Gentile nations. Israel's hardening, though not the ground of the Gentiles' reception of salvation—this ground lies exclusively in the death and resurrection of Christ—nevertheless serves to let the gospel which announces and appropriates salvation be preached among the Gentiles and thus reach them with its saving power.

The hardening of the majority of Israel is only *preliminary* and thus *temporally limited*, as Paul indicates with diverse expressions from Rom. 11:12 on. Though the number of the Jews who have become participants in salvation at the present is "reduced to a remnant,"[83] God will "fill up" this remnant to its "full number"[84] (v. 12). The ἀποβολή, divine "rejection," which now holds sway will with certainty be followed by the προσλημψις, divine "acceptance" (v. 15). While God cut the branches off the cultivated olive tree, he will nevertheless undoubtedly graft them in again (v. 24). These assertions come to a climax in 11:25-32. For here Paul gives the crucial reason for his conviction that the hardening of the majority of Israel is rooted in God's plan to save the Gentiles and that the presently hardened Jews will also be saved. In the course of his argument Paul puts forth not only the *fact* that they will yet be saved, but he also indicates *when* and *in what way* the now hardened Jews will be saved. The section 11:25ff. carries significant weight in the argument by virtue of the fact that the apostle here discloses a μυστήριον, an eschatological "secret" the knowledge and comprehension of which he owes to a revelation which he received from God himself. This "mystery" comprises vv. 25b-27, that is, includes also the scriptural quotation in vv. 26b, 27. It has two members, both formally in its structure and materially in its content. It runs thus:

I [25b]God has put a partial hardening over Israel
until the time is reached
when the fullness of the Gentiles will have gone in;

[82] The passive ἐξεκλάσθησαν at Rom. 11:17 is a circumlocution for divine action—as also the passives at 11:19, 20a, 22-24. The datives τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ and τῇ πίστει at 11:20 should be taken as *modal* datives.

[83] This is the meaning of the word ἥττημα at 11:12a.

[84] This is the meaning of the word πλήρωμα at 11:12b.

II [26]and when this will have happened,
then all Israel will be saved,
as it is written:
'The Deliverer will come from Zion
He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.
[27]And this will be for them the fulfillment
of the covenant promise I made:
Then I will have taken away their sins.'[85]

The *first member* of the "mystery" (I) comprises the two lines of v. 25b: πώρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τῷ Ἰσραὴλ γέγονεν / ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ. The first line mentions a "partial hardening," i.e., a hardening limited to a certain part of Israel, in other words, the hardening which God caused to fall upon all Israelites that do not belong to the elect "remnant" of 11:5.[86] The second line stresses that this "partial hardening" of Israel is temporally limited and that it serves a divinely intended purpose. It is limited by the point in time at which the πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν "will have come in," and it serves the purpose of the "coming in" of the πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν.[87] The phrase πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν here means the "complete number" of Gentiles determined by God who are to attain salvation. It is not to be taken numerically in the sense of "all" Gentiles whatsoever, but "as many as are appointed to eternal life," in the words of Acts 13:48. Εἰσέρχεσθαι, which denotes the action of this "complete number," apparently refers to their entrance into the "Israel which is the end-time community of salvation."[88] It is the equivalent of the metaphorical notion of "being engrafted" in the "cultivated olive tree" at 11:17, 19, 24. The statement that the "complete number" of the Gentiles will "come in" to Israel the community of salvation is to be seen against the background of the Old Testament expectation of the eschatological pilgrimage to Zion by the Gentile nations.[89] According to this expectation, the redemption of Israel at the end-time will result in the flocking of the Gentile nations to the people whom God has

[85] For a detailed grammatical analysis which forms the basis for this translation and the interpretation of the text in the following discussion, see Hofius, "Das Evangelium und Israel" (see n. 35 above), 311ff., or 189ff. I will have to limit myself in the present study to the most important points.

[86] The prepositional phrase ἀπὸ μέρους is adnominal to πώρωσις and has a quantitative (numerical) sense. The predicate γέγονεν is a circumlocution for God's action.

[87] ἄχρι οὗ c. conj. aor. has not only temporal but also final connotations; cf. 1 Cor. 11:26; 15:25; Lk. 21:24.

[88] U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* II, EKK VI/2 (Neukirchen-Vluyn and Zürich/Einsiedeln/Köln, 1980), pp. 254f.

[89] On this notion, see J. Jeremias, *Jesu Verheißung für die Völker* (Stuttgart, ²1959), pp. 47ff.

delivered, their recognition and worship of the God of Israel, and thus their sharing in the salvation of Israel. Paul departs from this expectation insofar as he has the Gentiles attain salvation not through the salvation, but the hardening, of Israel. Nevertheless, Paul retains in toto the idea that God's action toward and with Israel serves to win the Gentiles.

The *second member* of the "mystery" (II) consists in the clause καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται at v. 26a and in the subsequent scriptural quotation at vv. 26b, 27. The interpretation of the two words καὶ οὕτως is crucial for a correct understanding of v. 26a as well as the whole context, but their interpretation is highly debated. In my opinion, καὶ οὕτως here refers to the preceding and is inferential (*rückweisend-logisch*).[90] V. 26a thus states that not until the complete "coming in" of the Gentiles into Israel the community of salvation *can* the salvation of "all Israel" take place, but then it certainly *will* take place. The expression πᾶς Ἰσραήλ, a rendering of the Hebrew *kol jiśrā'ēl*, in the Old Testament is a collective designation for the people of Israel in its entirety, without however the connotation of numerical completeness—the sum of all individual Israelites. Further, there is no doubt that πᾶς Ἰσραήλ at Rom. 11:26a refers only to *Jews*. The clause πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται, which foretells a future event, is clearly antithetical to the statement in v. 25b that God caused a partial hardening to fall upon Israel at present, so that now only a few receive σωτηρία, namely, the elect "remnant" of 11:5, 7a.[91] "All Israel" thus means all Israel which at the present time does not (yet) believe in Christ and thus does not yet participate in salvation. The question arises, however, whether Paul intends the expression "all Israel" to be taken synchronically or diachronically. Does he have in mind only the Jews alive at the end time—synchronic—or is he thinking of the Israel of all times—diachronic? A conclusive answer cannot be found. But in favor of the diachronic sense,[92] an extremely close parallel can be established between the statement "all Israel will be saved" and the well-known affirmation in *Sanh* 10:1: "All Israel will have a share in the world to come" (*kl jśr'l jš lhm ḥlq l'wlm hb'*). This comment refers to the time *after* the resurrection from the dead and is thus speaking of Israel in a diachronic sense.[93] If we take πᾶς Ἰσραήλ at Rom. 11:26a likewise in a dia-

[90] For this usage, see 1 Cor. 11:28; 1 Thess. 4:17; Sir. 32(35):1; 33(36):4; 1 Macc. 13:47; 4 Macc. 1:12; *T. Job* 5:3; *Apoc. Mos.* 37; *Barn.* 7:8; Philogelos (ed. A Thierfelder), §§57.243.

[91] πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται is also antithetical to τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται ("only a remnant will be saved") at 9:27 = Is. 10:22 (Paul applies this text to the present!).

[92] For the diachronic use of the expression "all Israel," cf. Mal. 3:22.

[93] The diachronic sense is present also in *T. Benj.* 10:11, where the coming era of salvation is in view: καὶ συναχθήσεται πρὸς κύριον πᾶς Ἰσραήλ.

chronic sense, the salvation of "all Israel" presupposes the general resurrection. Not the least significant factor supporting this view of v. 26a is the statement in 11:15 which links the "acceptance" of Israel, which will put an end to their abandonment to unbelief, with the ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν. For it can be convincingly argued that ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν here denotes the general resurrection.[94]

V. 26a voices with perfect clarity the certainty *that* "all Israel" will yet be saved. Then the scripture Paul quotes at vv. 26b, 27[95] provides information on the *manner* and precise *time* of Israel's salvation. The mixed quotation has by no means merely a supportive function but is intended primarily to indicate the *manner* of the salvation of Israel at the end time. The "deliverer" whose coming it foretells is *Christ*—the Kyrios at his return at the last day.[96] It follows that the salvation of "all Israel" will take place at the return of Christ, and through Christ himself. He "will remove ungodliness from Jacob" so that through him God will "take away" the "sins" of Israel—therein consists the redemptive activity of Christ at the last day, as the word of the prophet indicates. That is, at his return Christ removes the "hardening" of Israel by putting an end to that state of lostness which Paul characterized in Rom. 1:18–3:20 as ἀσέβεια (1:18) and ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι (3:9). Further, in that Israel is saved through liberation from its "ungodliness" and forgiveness of its "sins," Israel now experiences the *justificatio impiorum* which was foretold in the promise of blessing of Gen. 12:2f. That state of affairs will constitute the "fulfillment" of God's "covenant promise" to "all Israel"[97]—the final and full realization of the promise of salvation made to Abraham and his physical descendants. Then will it be shown to be true that "the gracious gifts and elective calling of God are irrevocable," as Paul says in Rom. 11:29. And because that is true, Israel remains irrevocably enclosed in the love of God (11:28), even in its "no" to the gospel.

One particular aspect of Paul's affirmation of the future salvation of "all Israel" in Rom. 11:25ff. must be examined more closely. The apostle certainly does *not* have in mind a further, end-time evangelistic proclamation of the gospel to Israel by the church, followed by Israel's believing in the gospel which it has heard *preached*. "All Israel" is *not* saved by the *preaching*

[94] In this regard, see esp. J. Chr. K. v. Hofmann, *Der Brief Pauli an die Römer* (Die heilige Schrift neuen Testaments III; Nördlingen, 1868), pp. 482f.

[95] The quotation is a combination of Is. 59:20f. and Is. 27:9. The phrase ἐκ Σιών is from Ps. 49:1 LXX and replaces ἕνεκεν Σιών of Is. 59:20 LXX (conclusion by analogy!).

[96] This interpretation follows from 1 Thess. 1:10.

[97] Paul uses the word διαθήκη at 11:27 with reference to the "covenant promises" made to Abraham, and by διαθήκη here (used metonymically) he means their *fulfillment*.

of the gospel. By no means, however, does that imply a "Sonderweg," a way of salvation which bypasses the gospel and faith in Christ! Rather, Israel will hear the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself at his return—the saving word of his self-revelation which effects the faith that takes hold of divine salvation.[98] When "all Israel" encounters the *Kyrios* at the parousia, it encounters the *gospel*! In this light it becomes clear that the "salvation" foretold in 11:26a is the same as the salvation of which Paul speaks in Rom. 10:9f. and 10:13, namely, the salvation experienced by the one who confesses Jesus as Lord and in faith "calls upon the name of the Lord." The Israel which will meet Christ at his return will thus believe in *him*[99] and will call upon *his* name, confessing him as κύριος Ἰησοῦς, and thereby take hold of σωτηρία. Then the affirmation of Rom. 1:16 will hold true for "all Israel": the gospel is δύναμις Θεοῦ εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι. "All Israel" is thus saved in a *different* way than the Gentile Christians and the "remnant," which already believes in Christ, namely, not through the evangelistic preaching of the church. Instead "all Israel" is saved directly by the Kyrios himself. But that means that it is *not* saved without Christ, *not* without the gospel, and *not* without faith in Christ. If, therefore, Israel gets the gospel through a direct encounter with Christ himself, confesses Christ as the Kyrios, and comes to faith in him unto salvation, then *Israel comes to faith in the same way as Paul himself!* For Paul was seeking the δικαιοσύνη ἐκ νόμου through strict observance of the Torah and for that reason had responded with a vehement "no" to the gospel when he met the resurrected and exalted Kyrios and was overcome by him. So it will be with Israel too. Thus Rom. 11:1 throws new light on the subject of Israel's salvation above and beyond that provided by the notion of the "remnant" in this verse: "Has God rejected his people? By no means! For *I too* am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Paul recognizes and understands himself to be a prototype of the Israel which is closed to the gospel *and* not abandoned by the electing God.

V

Finally, let us consider whether we can detect any indications of the way the apostle arrived at the insight disclosed in the "mystery" of which he informs us in Rom. 11:25b-27. We do in fact have such indications, it seems

[98] For Paul the gospel is *not* identical with the evangelistic proclamation. Rather the gospel is the *word of Christ himself*, which forms the basis for the evangelistic proclamation. In this regard, see Hofius, "Wort Gottes und Glaube bei Paulus" (see n. 16 above), pp. 150ff.

[99] Cf. 11:23: Israel will *not* continue in unbelief.

to me, and they are found in the numerous scriptural quotations in Romans 9-11. In ancient Judaism not only such insights as are based on a *revelatio specialissima* or on prophetic inspiration could be described as "mysteries." Even something which God himself discloses to a human being from the *holy scripture* can constitute a "secret." 1QpHab 7:4f., for example, says of the Teacher of Righteousness: God made known to him "all the secrets of the words of his servants the prophets." The "secret" therefore is hidden in the prophetic word of the scripture; it is "revealed" *from the scripture* to the one who searches the scripture under divine illumination.

The scriptural quotations in Romans 9–11 show clearly enough that Paul sought and found in the *scripture* the answer to the question exercizing him, that of Israel's unbelief. The scripture informed him that the keeping of God's promise to Abraham during the course of Israel's history includes: God's sovereign and gracious election and his rejection, his calling and his hardening (9:6ff.). Further he found in the scripture the belief in the preached gospel and salvation of only a "remnant" from Israel at present (9:27ff.; 10:15ff; 11:2ff.), the divine hardening of the majority of Israel presently (11:7ff.) and their stumbling over Christ in unbelief according to God's will (9:32f.), the Gentiles' reception of salvation, though they did not seek it, and the failure of Israel to find salvation, though it did pursue it (9:24ff., 30ff.; 10:19ff.), and the fact that God has nevertheless "*not* rejected" his people (11:1f.) and that "*all* Israel" will be saved from its "sin" and "ungodliness" by the coming "deliverer" (11:26f.).

Apropos of Paul's persuasion that "all Israel" will finally participate in salvation, it could be that he has other assertions of scripture in mind which he fails to cite expressly. Lamentations, say, could have provided him with the affirmation that God's rejection is always temporally limited and that God's freely granted mercy will in the end win over rejection: "The Lord will *not* reject (his people) forever; for though he abases (it), he will have compassion again according to his abundant lovingkindness" (Lam. 3:31f. LXX). Of particular importance in this regard, however, is the message of Deutero-Isaiah, to which Paul's theology and proclamation is manifoldly indebted. There he could find a perfectly clear expression of the promise of the final salvation of *all* Israel: "*All* the offspring of the children of Israel will be saved by the Lord and will be glorified by God" (ἀπὸ κυρίου δικαιωθήσονται καὶ ἐν τῷ Θεῷ ἐνδοξασθήσονται πᾶν τὸ σπέρμα τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ, Is. 45:25 LXX); further: "Israel will be saved by the Lord with an *everlasting* salvation (Ἰσραὴλ σώζεται ὑπὸ κυρίου σωτηρίαν αἰώ-

νιον); they will not perish or be put to shame to all eternity" (Is. 45:17 LXX).

These examples will suffice. They should demonstrate adequately enough that key assertions of the "mystery" in Rom. 11:25b-27 as well as the whole of Romans 9-11 are based on the holy scripture of the apostle.[100]

[100] For further support, see my article cited in n. 35 above (323f., or 201f.). In that article I also suggest that Paul could be indebted to Old Testament texts, especially Is. 59:19ff.; 45:14-17; 45:20-25; Mic. 4:1-8, for the sequence *the Gentiles—Israel* presupposed in Romans 9-11 (that is, the reversal of the sequence characteristic of the motif of the pilgrimage to Zion).

Romans 9-11 in the Context of the Early Church

by J. Christiaan Beker

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In reflecting on the topic "The Church and Israel" and in considering the impressive history of Jewish-Christian dialogue since the end of World War II, there remains an astonishing fact. In a time when, generally speaking, pluralism and tolerance dictate our way of life, it is very difficult for us to imagine why the contingent circumstances of a long-past rivalry between two siblings of the same parent could have produced such an age-long history of conflict, hatred, and persecution.

This history of conflict still leaves its scars on us, so that it in one way or another accompanies and influences our search for historical integrity and mutual understanding. All too often our new-found tolerance toward each other degenerates into indifference or into superficial gestures at harmony in order to soothe Christian guilt. Indeed, where toleration degenerates into lack of conviction such indifference or superficial gesturing results. We often forget that confessional conviction is quite different from blind fanaticism or from the imperialist imposition of one's conviction on others, although the history of Christendom's relations to Judaism shows us the all-too-frequent transgression of conviction into absolutist claims. Indeed, when conviction degenerates into monologue and in silencing or ridiculing the conviction of others, we destroy not only our humanity, but the humanity of others as well. Therefore, our dialogue with Judaism must take place without false harmonizations and must not allow intellectual rigor and honesty to be compromised either in surrendering Christian conviction *or* in allowing Christian guilt-feelings about Christianity's anti-Semitic heritage to dominate the dialogue.

This paper will focus on two basic questions: first, Is Paul's position toward Judaism exceptional among the authors of the New Testament? and second, If the New Testament witness constitutes a hindrance for the church's dialogue with Judaism, is not there an urgent need for a new view of the authority of the New Testament, if this dialogue is to make any progress?

I will proceed as follows: (I) The letters of Paul in the context of the early church; (II) The cohesiveness of Paul's argument in Rom. 9-11; (III) Rom. 9-11 in the context of the letters of Paul; (IV) Conclusion.

I. The Letters of Paul in the Context of the Early Church

A virtual consensus exists in New Testament scholarship that Paul's position towards Israel, especially in Rom. 9-11, is exceptionally positive in comparison with the other writings of the New Testament.

For instance, F. W. Beare states, in commenting on Paul's reference to Jews as "dogs" in Phil. 3:2: " 'the dogs' is undoubtedly an epithet hurled at the Jews, his own people, for whom he has nevertheless a deep and abiding love," citing Rom. 10:1 and Rom. 9:3 (*Philippians*, p. 103). Likewise Traugott Holtz remarks in the context of Paul's harsh condemnation of the Jews in 1 Thess. 2:14-16: "Ganz anders ist die Situation Röm. 9-11" (*Der Erste Brief an die Thessalonicher*, p. 109). And I myself wrote: "In contrast to these New Testament witnesses (John, Matthew, Luke), Paul does not identify the church with the New Israel. Although his assessment of the function of the law is negative, he is positive toward Israel as God's people—Israel has not only a positive function in past salvation-history, but also a positive function in future salvation-history, for there will be no eschatological deliverance without the salvation of Israel (Rom. 11:25-26). This stance toward Israel is unique in the New Testament and post-apostolic literature" (*Paul the Apostle*, p. 330). Moreover, there is almost no church document concerning Jewish-Christian relations which does not focus on Paul's positive stance toward Judaism among the New Testament authors. (cf. Vatican II on the Jews. *Nostra Aetate* [n. 4] 1965; statement on Catholic-Jewish Relations. U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Nov., 1975: "We find in the Epistle to the Romans [9-11] long-neglected passages which help us to construct a new and positive attitude toward the Jewish people"; *Christians and Jews: A Unique Relationship*, a preliminary report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, 1983: "For our contemporary guidance, we cannot do better than to reflect on chapters 9-11 of Paul's Epistle to the Romans," p. 7.)

However, is Paul's stance toward Judaism really so exceptional in the New Testament?

In this context it is important to know who among the New Testament authors show knowledge of a pre-70 C.E. incipient rabbinism. By this criterion, it seems that Paul, Matthew, John, and Luke-Acts[1] are the only New Testament writers who qualify. And among these authors Paul seems to provide us with the most positive scenario in the New Testament for a Jewish-Christian dialogue.

[1] The attitude of Luke-Acts towards Judaism is a matter of continuing scholarly debate.

In John the Jews are equated with a fallen world and its darkness. A satanic genealogy (8:44) is attributed to them, and Jesus is portrayed as a metaphysical miracle without concrete relationship to the Jewish community: he is a stranger within Judaism (10:34). The true people of God are the pneumatics, who are Jesus' "own," his "disciples" and "friends," and they simply displace Israel as God's people. The incidental and enigmatic reference in 4:22, "for salvation is for the Jews" cannot exonerate the basic anti-Jewish tenor of this Gospel.

The structure of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke impresses on the reader the finality of God's judgment upon the nation of Israel (not just its leadership). Notwithstanding the occasionally appreciative attitude of Jesus toward Pharisees, scribes, and the people of Israel, the Synoptic Gospels all climax in an acrimonious polemic against Judaism: just before the Passion-story, all three (Mk. 12:1-12; Mt. 21:33-46; Lk. 20:9-19) have Jesus narrate the parable of the wicked husbandmen—an allegory of Israel's final judgment by God and its displacement by the church. Matthew 21:41 even sharpens the language of Mk. 12:9 (par. Lk. 20:16): "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits of their season." Although Matthew—as the spokesman of an Hellenistic-Jewish church that is conscious of its Jewish heritage of Torah and Halakah—is aware of the need to correlate in some way the traditional Torah and the messianic Torah of Jesus, he is also convinced that the church is the true Israel because Jesus and his new law have fulfilled the ancient promises (cf. his "fulfillment" quotations). It is interesting that in Matthew's crucifixion scene the "crowd" (27:15,24) suddenly becomes "the people [of Israel]" (27:25), so that the people of Israel as a whole are made responsible for Jesus' death and seal their own judgment: "and all the people answered 'his blood be upon us and on our children' " (27:25).

The Gospel of Luke is marked by the increasing hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees which foreshadows the hour of their final condemnation, especially clear at the conclusion of the travel-narrative section: "But for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me" (Lk. 19:26,27).

The Book of Acts reports the final doom of the Jews: the Pharisees who uphold the resurrection against the Sadducees deny their own faith in rejecting Jesus' resurrection (Acts 23:6-10). In Luke's salvation-historical sketch, Israel has a distinct priority. He states repeatedly: "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you (i.e., the Jews). Since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold,

we turn to the Gentiles" (13:46; 18:6; 28:28). Yet this salvation-historical priority is only the foil for the final rejection of the Jews. The climax of the book announces that the gospel is denied to the Jews and now travels to the Gentiles (28:26-28). In fact, Luke-Acts commences a trend which will mark the subsequent history of the church's anti-Jewish polemic: it indicts the Jews primarily on moral grounds. Because the Jews are immoral, they kill the innocent Jesus, just as they have persecuted their own prophets, and they instigate false accusations and riots against Paul. Not only moral guilt but also ignorance characterizes Judaism according to Luke-Acts: the Jews do not understand their own religion. Otherwise they would not have rejected Jesus as Messiah since his resurrection fulfills the best of the Jewish tradition (Acts 23).

Excluding for the moment the letters of Paul, let me summarize at this point the basic stance of the New Testament writings toward Judaism. To the extent that they are familiar with Judaism at all and are not preoccupied with Jewish Gnosticizers (cf., for instance, the Pastoral Epistles; Revelation (?); 2 Peter; Jude), they all embrace the displacement theory and consider Judaism ripe for God's final judgment. This holds true whether Jews are forever excluded from the church as the true Israel or whether the door of conversion still remains open to them.

Even when Israel is awarded priority in terms of its salvation-historical status—as, for instance, in Luke-Acts and the deutero-Pauline letter Ephesians (ch. 2)—that priority becomes either the foil for its condemnation by the gospel (Acts) or it is simply swallowed up by the new entity of the church (Ephesians).

The epistle to the Hebrews affords a good example of R. Ruether's thesis that anti-Judaism is "the left hand of Christology" (*Faith and Fratricide*, 1974). Although many Christians would like to affirm the statement: "the epistle does not directly address the issue of the relationship between Jewish and Christian communities living at the time—far from denigrating the Jews, the epistle interprets the significance of Jesus Christ on the basis of Hebrew scriptures" (Preliminary Document of the Task-Force on Jewish-Christian relations, commissioned by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, 1983, p. 7), this statement is, however irenic, erroneous. An epistle which uses typology and allegory to celebrate the uniqueness of the high-priesthood of Christ in such a way as to demean and misinterpret the Jewish cultic system very much "denigrates the Jews," especially when Hebrews does not operate simply on a modality of continuity-fulfillment, but as well on that of discontinuity-abolition (cf. 10:9).

II. The Cohesiveness of Paul's Argument in Romans 9-11

The issue of the *cohesiveness* of Paul's argument in Rom. 9-11 is directly related to the *theological coherence* of Paul's thought about the relation of the church to Israel. For if it can be demonstrated that Rom. 9-11 exhibits a consistent argument and conviction, it can serve not only as the climax of Paul's mature thought about Israel, but also as the interpretive key to his statements about this matter in his other letters.

However, a careful distinction must be drawn between (A) the function of Rom. 9-11 within the context of the letter as a whole, and (B) the cohesiveness of the argument of Rom. 9-11 itself.

ad A: There can be no doubt that contrary to the opinion of many scholars, including R. Bultmann, C. H. Dodd, Wm. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, R. Scroggs and F. W. Beare—who consider Rom. 9-11 to be too particular and awkward to be awarded any theological weight and thus relegate it to a Pauline afterthought—Rom. 9-11 is the climax of the theme of the letter. The gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God, i.e., "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (1:16,17). Moreover, the righteousness of faith in the gospel is undergirded by an appeal to Hab. 2:4 (1:17b) and thus defined as the confirmation and fulfillment of God's promise to Israel. In tracing Paul's development of the theme, we notice that, notwithstanding preliminary climactic statements along the way (4:24-25; 5:9-11; 5:20-21; 8:38-39), the basic climax of the letter is reached—prior to the paraenesis of Rom. 12-15—in 11:32: "For God has consigned all people to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all," followed by the hymnic conclusion of 11:33-36. The climax of the letter seems to suggest that the *pas* ("everyone"; "all") argument carries the day so that the universal pitch of the gospel ("to everyone"; 1:16) seems to drown out the emphasis on the particularity and priority of the Jew in the thematic statement of Rom. 1:16b. However, this first impression is quite mistaken. Although Rom. 11:32 is the climax and crown of Paul's argument, its emphasis on the universal embrace of God's mercy ("that he may have mercy upon all") occurs in a context which affirms the particularity of Israel's eschatological priority (Rom. 11:25-26). Thus Rom. 11:25-32 confirms the thesis of the theme of Rom. 1:16,17, where both the equality of Jew and Gentile and the priority of Israel are declared to be manifestations of the righteousness of God. Indeed, the righteousness of God comprises a hermeneutical field, which not only embraces Israel's covenant theology (*hesed*, *emet*, *zedakah*) and is thus correlated with terms such as *pistis theou*

("the faithfulness of God," Rom. 3:3); *aletheia theou* ("the truthfulness of God," Rom. 3:7) and *eleos theou* ("the mercy of God," cf. Rom. 11:31-32; 15:9), but also defines it as God's eschatological salvation-power, which claims the creation for God's lordship and sovereignty, as proleptically manifested in the Christ-event. Thus the righteousness of God points both backward to God's promise to Israel and forward to God's full realization of his promise in the apocalyptic hour, when Israel, along with the Gentiles and the whole created order, shall "live" in the *gloria Dei*, according to the promise of "life" of Hab. 2:4 (Rom. 1:17).

The priority of Israel, then, is the necessary consequence of God's faithfulness and righteousness. For unless the protological election of Israel in the Old Testament is confirmed by the eschatological destiny of Israel at the time of the eschatological triumph of God, the gospel itself ceases to have authentic validity. In that case, the gospel is not only severed from its foundation in the Hebrew Scriptures, but also loses its anchorage in God's faithfulness: for if God's promises to Israel have become null and void, how are Gentiles to trust the confirmation of these promises to them in Christ?

ad B: There can be no doubt, then, that Rom. 11:25-36 is the climax of the letter, since it is directly related to its twin-theme, i.e., the priority of Israel and the equality of Jew and Gentile in Christ on the basis of justification by faith alone. It is also clear that the theme is undergirded and nourished by Paul's insistence on God's faithfulness to his promises. Hence Paul's remarkable emphases in 11:26,27, and especially in vv. 28b and 29: "as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable."

However, how cohesive is the overall argument of Rom. 9-11? Does it really prepare the ground for its climactic conclusion in 11:25-36? Is the *mysterion* of 11:25 that introduces this climactic conclusion a revelatory disclosure which affirms Paul's previous arguments and gives them divine authentication, *or* is it a novel disclosure which contradicts and disconfirms Paul's previous statements?

It seems to me that Rom. 9-11 is simply inconsistent in its argumentation. It is the only place in the Pauline letters where Paul is engaged in an ongoing experiment of thought rather than in the expression of a finalized thought.

In the context of our topic "The Church and Israel," I will select two issues in Rom. 9-11, which exemplify Paul's contradictory statements: (1) his definition of "Israel"; and (2) his definition of the nature of "Israel's prior-

ity"—a conviction which, as we have seen, belongs to the basic theme of the letter (1:16; cf. 3:1-3).

ad 1: Paul defines "Israel" in ways which are mutually exclusive: in 9:8 he defines Israel in contrast to "the children of the flesh" (i.e., ethnic Israel) as "the children of the promise" (i.e., as the spiritual Israel[2])—an entity which according to 9:24-26 includes Gentiles and which defines the church ("even us whom he has called not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles" [9:24]) as the true Israel.[3]

However in 9:27, 29 Paul speaks about the true Israel as "the remnant" or "the seed" (cf. also 11:5,7), i.e., in terms of an offshoot from ethnic Israel. And at last a final solution to the problem dawns with the revelation of the mystery in 11:25, where—contrary to his earlier statements about a spiritual Israel or an offshoot of ethnic Israel—Paul now states that "all Israel will be saved" (11:26) in the apocalyptic consummation. In fact, how can Paul assert the salvation of "all Israel" subsequent to its "partial" hardening in 11:25, after he has convinced his readers of the "complete" hardening of Israel in 9:22-23 and 11:7-10 ("Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever").

The interpretation of 9:22-24 is, to be sure, fraught with literary and theological difficulties due to the anakolouth in the sentence-structure and the condensed nature of Paul's speech. Many scholars have interpreted "the vessels of wrath" as a reference to Pharaoh and the hardening of his heart (9:17.18), i.e., as the exemplification of God's way of guiding salvation-history in terms of a dialectic of wrath and mercy. Such an interpretation relieves Paul of destructive statements with respect to Israel. However, a more natural reading of the passage suggests that the reference to the destruction of the vessels of wrath has both Pharaoh's and Israel's destiny in mind, especially since the vessels of wrath are not identical with the group of people who in the course of salvation-history constitute the vessels of mercy. This is confirmed by the use of the perfect participle in v. 22: *katertismena eis apoleian*, "fitted for eternal destruction," obviously a group which does not belong to the vessels of mercy. For in contrast to the vessels of wrath, God "has prepared the vessels of mercy beforehand for glory" (v. 23). Moreover, the focus of the passage is on the call of the Gentiles ("not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles" [v. 24], followed in vv. 25, 26 with

[2] Paul makes a similar move in Gal. 4:29, where the child of the promise (v. 23) is defined as the child "born according to the Spirit" (v. 29).

[3] Contradicting my assertion (*Paul The Apostle*, p. 328) that Paul does not transfer the term "Israel" to the Christian church.

citations of Hosea, which attribute to Gentiles the status of the true people of God.

ad 2: As to the nature of "Israel's priority," 11:25-36 suggests that in the eschatological hour Israel's integrity as a covenant people will be authenticated and confirmed.

However, whether this suggestion can be substantiated depends on the context, function, and content of the *mysterion* of 11:25.

If the function of the *mysterion* refers to a novel revelatory disclosure, then one can argue that Paul's previous arguments have been disconfirmed and are now corrected from a completely new perspective. Paul's use of *mysterion* in 11:25 and in 1 Cor. 15:51, where the term (and here alone) denotes the revelation of a specific apocalyptic mystery, seems to confirm this latter interpretation. (Paul uses the term elsewhere in reference to the plan of salvation [1 Cor. 2:1,7; 4:1] or to secret knowledge [1 Cor. 13:2; 14:2].) Indeed *mysterion* refers here and in 1 Cor. 15:51 to a future event of the end-time and to an occurrence which is exclusively due to God's apocalyptic intervention.

In this case "the salvation of all Israel" (11:26) cannot refer to Israel's conversion as the result of Christian mission, i.e., as the end result of the process of arousing Israel's jealousy (11:11,14). And it cannot be equated either with the Jewish-Christian church, because the mystery clearly points to an eschatological event.

In this case, Paul does not envision Israel's eschatological salvation as its absorption into the Gentile-Christian church. Indeed, in this case Israel's destiny is described very differently from its portrayal in Ephesians, a post-Pauline letter. For there Israel is simply absorbed in the one church of Jews and Gentiles and henceforth ceases to exist as a separate entity. In fact, the "absorption-scheme" of Ephesians is congruent with its very different definition of the *mysterion*: here it refers to Paul's execution of God's plan of salvation which aims to unify Jew and Greek into the new universal entity of the church.

Moreover, if Rom. 11:25-26 represents a new revelatory insight, which disconfirms Paul's previous arguments, then Paul seems to suggest in 11:25-26 that Israel as a people has a special eschatological destiny, since its salvation occurs only *after* the Gentile mission has been completed. Finally, in this case the *content* of the *mysterion* is not only the interdependence between Jew and Gentile in salvation-history (the modal meaning of *houtos* in v. 26), but also the temporal succession of the salvation of the Gentiles before the Jews in the apocalyptic hour (the temporal meaning of *houtos* in v. 26,

undergirded by the temporal meanings of *achri hou* in v. 25b and of the *hotan*-clause and the future tense of the verbs in the citations of vv. 26b and 27).

However, if one rejects the fragmentation of the flow of the argument in Rom. 9-11 and claims that the introduction of the mystery in 11:25 does not disrupt Paul's previous thought pattern, then Israel's integrity as a covenant-people *sui generis* cannot be maintained. Indeed, Paul's allusions to Israel's "full inclusion" (v. 12) and to its "holy root" (v. 16b; cf. also vv. 15 and 16a) which precede the revelation of the mystery of 11:25 seem to favor the meaning of the mystery as the interdependent manner of God's salvation-historical plan (see above). Thus if the *mysterion* of 11:25 cannot be interpreted as a novel departure and as the disruption of Paul's previous arguments, we must acknowledge that the focus of the argument in 11:11-24 rests not only on the jealousy-motif, which must draw Jews to the gospel (vv. 11, 14), but also on Israel's absorption into the church as the new Israel (vv. 17-23). For in 11:11-24 it is clear that Israel's salvation depends on its acceptance of faith in Christ ("not persisting in their unbelief," v. 23).

Therefore, when one considers the total flow of the argument of Rom. 9-11 to be consistent and cohesive, one must conclude that a conversion-model rules the section, i.e., Israel's absorption in the church by means of Christian mission or/and by means of an eschatological act of God who will remove Israel's hardening and open its heart to the truth of God in Christ. It is only when one fragments the flow of the argument and posits a radical new beginning with the revelation of the mystery in 11:25-36—a new beginning that overhauls Paul's prior arguments—that the special election and destiny of Israel as an entity separate from the church can be asserted. Such a move would justify a two-covenant model rather than a conversion-model.

It seems to me, then, that Rom. 9-11 contains many ambiguous and contradictory statements and that the movement of its argument is neither cohesive nor consistent: unclarity abounds with respect both to the definition of Israel and to the nature of Israel's priority. Scholars—who for the sake of an irenic Jewish-Christian dialogue—concentrate exclusively on 11:25-36 and neglect its basic connection with 9:1-11:24 transgress the hermeneutical rule of the relation of the parts to the whole. For—after all—Paul sent the letter as a whole to Rome, convinced of its integral cohesiveness and did not delete sections of 9:1-11:24 as if they represented a variety of tentative ruminations.

Although Paul's anguish about Israel runs like a red thread through Rom. 9-11 (9:1-4; 10:1-2; 11:11ff.), and although the priority of Israel is

maintained throughout Romans—especially against the denigrating attitude of the Gentile-Christian majority toward Judaism in Rome (11:13-25), Paul's positive attitude toward Israel as God's people is ultimately based on his expectation that they will embrace the gospel.

I now turn to section III, i.e., the question whether Paul's other letters confirm or disconfirm the "conversion"-model of Rom. 9-11.

III. Rom. 9-11 in the Context of the Letters of Paul

A. Romans 9-11 manifests the profound bond and intense participation of Paul with the Jewish people (9:1-4; 10:1-2; 11:1). His usual terminology in referring to the Jewish people (*loudaios*; *peritome*; *hoi ek nomou* [Rom. 4:14,16], *hoi hypo nomon* [1 Cor. 9:20; Gal. 4:5,21]; *hoitines en nomoi* [Gal. 5:3]) is almost entirely absent in Rom. 9-11 (*loudaos*: only in Rom. 9:24 and 10:12). Instead Paul uses the honorific, salvation-historical terms "Israel" (Rom. 9:6,27; 10:19, 21; 11:2, 7, 25, 26) and "Israelite" (Rom. 9:4; 11:1). This is striking, because nowhere else does Paul refer to the Jewish people in this fashion (cf. the pejorative "*Israel kata sarka*," 1 Cor. 10:18); "sons of Israel" used in reference to Exodus 34 (LXX) in 2 Cor. 3:7,13; "the Israel of God" [Gal. 6:16], see later). Paul's frequent use of *laos* (God's people) in Romans also points to Israel's salvation-historical status (cf. Rom. 9:25-26; 10:21; 11:1-2; 15:10-11; elsewhere only 1 Cor. 10:7; 14:21 and 2 Cor. 6:16).

Moreover, only in Rom. 9-11 does Paul refer to Jews as "his brothers" and "kinsmen by race" (9:3; but cf. Rom. 16:7, 11, 21, and his self-references in Phil 3:5 [*ek genous Israel, phyles Benjamin, Hebraios ex Hebraion, kata nomon Pharisaios*] and in 2 Cor. 11:22 [*Hebraios*; *Israelites*; *sperma Abraam*]). And nowhere else does he list the enduring privileges of Israel in such a complete manner (9:1-4). In fact, the focus of Rom. 9-11 is so much directed towards Israel and its salvation-historical itinerary, that Paul's usual antithesis "Jew and Greek/Gentile" and their unity in Christ occurs only in 9:24 and 10:12. Moreover, in Rom. 9-11 Paul does not address the Jews directly. He speaks *about* the Jewish people *to* Gentiles. Indeed, Rom. 9-11 is not a dogmatic-abstract essay, but rather a reply to a contingent situation of Gentile-Christian disdain for Judaism that threatens not only the dignity of Judaism, but also the coherent center of Paul's gospel, for which the priority of the Jew is constitutive. Thus the "pro-Jewish" stance of Paul aims at destroying Gentile-Christian pride in Rome and reminds the Gentile Christians there that Judaism is "the root that supports you" (Rom. 11:18) and that without Israel Gentiles would not have attained their Christian status in the gospel.

B. The tone not only of Romans 9-11 but of the letter to the Romans as a whole with respect to the relation of the church to Israel is remarkably positive. Paul's stance in Romans is indeed exceptional in comparison with his other letters. Everywhere else Paul is engaged in polemics—whether directed at Jews, Jewish-Christians, or Judaizers. All this occurs in a situation of mutual hostility. Paul made the synagogue his missionary base to draw proselytes and God-fearers away into his house-churches—a strategy which Jews considered to be an opportunistic and accommodating manner of becoming sons and daughters of Abraham. Thus there was hostility and persecution of Paul from the Jewish synagogues (2 Cor. 11:22-29; 1 Thess. 2:15-16) and—if Acts is to be trusted—incitement by the Jews of the people and of the Roman authorities alike against the Christians.

Although Paul's polemic against Judaism must be understood in this context of antagonism and conflict, the virulence of his attack in 1 Thess. 2:14-16 is surprising. The literary unity of vv. 13-16 makes it impossible to accept the irenic gestures of scholars, who either designate vv. 14-16 as a later interpolation or have Paul quote a Jewish text, "un dicton juif appliqué originairement aux péchers ou aux ennemis d'Israel" (B. Rigaud, 456; referring to Test. Lev. 5:6). No side-glance at Rom. 9-11 can alleviate the eschatological finality of Paul's damnation of Israel, whether one translates *eis telos* (v. 16) which refers to God's wrath as "completely" or as "until the end."

The only other direct reference to Jews occurs in Rom. 2:17-29. This rhetorical diatribe functions to support Paul's basic thesis in 1:18-3:9, i.e., that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek "because both Jews and Greeks are under the power of sin" (3:9). But whatever its rhetorical function may be, the charge against Judaism is quite artificial, since Paul turns *against* Judaism, what Judaism itself teaches, i.e., prohibitions of theft, adultery, and idolatry (2:17-22).

However, Paul's conciliatory tone toward Judaism should be noticed in Romans 1-8: (1) the priority of the Jew (1:16; 2:9,10); (2) the Torah and its *mizwoth* as the norm of judgment (2:12,13); (3) the definition of the true Jew (2:28,29) in terms of inwardness; (4) the appreciation of circumcision if it correlates external circumcision with the circumcision of the heart (2:29); circumcision as the outward sign of a spiritual blessing (4:11) (in contrast to the purely spiritual interpretation of circumcision in Phil. 3:3); (5) the advantage of the Jew in being entrusted with the promises of God (3:1), more precisely elaborated in 9:1-4; (6) the inclusion of the Jews among the children of Abraham, "the father of the circumcised" (4:12,16); and especially the manner in which Paul describes Abraham in Rom. 4. The focus of the

argument is the unity and coequality of the circumcised and uncircumcised (4:16) in the one church of Jews and Gentiles. In this context Abraham—"our natural forefather" (4:1) is the origin and living exemplar of justifying faith in salvation-history. Although Abraham appears in 4:1-12 in a Christianized form (he is the example of the *justificatio impii* [v. 5]), his faith is described in Old Testament categories, i.e., as unconditional trust and as faith in the promise of God (4:17-21). Thus, according to Rom. 4, in Abraham's case, the Old Testament is consonant with the Christian gospel and proclaims an identical "gospel."

However, notwithstanding these conciliatory gestures, the "conversion-model" dominates Paul's thought in Romans: in chapter 4, for instance, there is no reflection on "the priority of the Jew" and Jews are absorbed by the church as the true Israel, which comprises both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

The conciliatory tone of Romans is displaced by sharp polemic in 2 Corinthians, Philippians, and Galatians. Here Paul does not address Jews, but rather Jewish-Christians of various stamp, who attempt to infiltrate Paul's Gentile churches and who attack Paul's apostolate as illegitimate and as a perversion of the "true" gospel (2 Cor. 10-13; Gal.; Phil. 3).

Notwithstanding the highly charged rhetorical situation of these letters, the attack on Jewish-Christians and Judaizers becomes indirectly an attack on Judaism, especially in Gal. 3. This letter has such a dominant Christological focus and posits such a sharp antithesis between the pre-Christian and Christian era, that Paul comes close to a Marcionite split between law and gospel and to a radical rejection of Judaism. In this context the meaning of the phrase "the Israel of God" (6:16) can only refer to the church as the true Israel.

IV. Conclusion

(i) Does Paul occupy an exceptional place among the New Testament authors?

This question must be answered on two levels: (a) As we have seen, Paul's attitude toward Judaism is quite conciliatory, not only in Rom. 9-11, but also in the letter to the Romans as a whole. We must remember in this context, that, as W. Meeks remarks, "the great issue in Pauline Christianity is not between 'the synagogue' and the sect of the Christians (as in the gospel of John), but within the Christian movement. . . . The identity of the groups (in the Johannine literature) is largely determined by their reaction to the synagogues and the synagogues' attitudes toward them. For Pauline Chris-

tianity the case is quite different—*Theologically* it is correct to say that the scriptures and traditions of Judaism are a central and ineffaceable part of the Pauline Christians' identity. *Socially*, however, the Pauline groups were never a sect of Judaism."[4] Thus we detect in Paul very few direct confrontations with Judaism. "Even the discussion in Rom. 9-11 does not arise from any active engagement between either the Pauline groups or the various Christian groups in Rome and the Jewish communities."[5]

Notwithstanding this social fact, it is theologically crucial for Paul to uphold the priority of the Jew in the gospel and to posit Israel's special eschatological future, so that God's protological election of Israel will be confirmed by its eschatological destiny.

Thus Paul's attitude toward Israel is exceptional in the New Testament in the sense that his dialogue with Israel is primarily a religious and open dialogue and does not degenerate in moral vilification. Whereas for authors like John, Matthew, and Luke a final judgment has fallen on Israel, no such final rejection is evident in Paul, who keeps the hope of Israel's conversion alive.[6]

(b) Nevertheless, although Paul's attitude toward Judaism is much more conciliatory than that of the other New Testament authors, the contradictory nature of Paul's argument in Rom. 9-11 and his direct and indirect polemics against Judaism in his other letters make it impossible to attribute to Paul an exceptional *theological* position toward Judaism among the New Testament writings. Although he does not engage in a displacement theory defined as hostile rejection, he nevertheless has a displacement-theory of his own, that is, the gospel as the fulfillment of God's promises. According to Paul this displacement-theory not only is in progress now, but also will be fully actualized in the eschatological hour.

Within the total flow of the argument of Rom. 9-11 it is impossible to maintain that Judaism will be given its own distinct place apart from Christianity at the end of time.

(ii) If a displacement theory is—in whatever form—characteristic of the New Testament view toward Judaism, the helpfulness of the New Testament for the church's dialogue with Judaism must be seriously questioned.

[4] W. Meeks, "Breaking Away: Three New Testament Pictures of Christianity's Separation from the Jewish Communities," in *To See Ourselves As Others See Us*, ed. J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs (Chico, CA. Scholars Press, 1985), p. 106.

[5] Meeks, ibid., pp. 106, 107.

[6] This may also be argued for *Matthew* and *Luke-Acts* if the *ethne* of Mt. 28:19 comprise all nations inclusive of Israel, and if J. Jervell's emphasis on the importance of Jewish conversions in *Acts* can be maintained.

We recognize, of course, that the confrontation between the Christian movement and Judaism in the New Testament is dominated by contingent situational factors, and that the investigation of those contingent factors helps us to reject the anti-Semitisms of the subsequent history of Christian doctrine. However, many documents on the relation of Christians and Jews still accord the New Testament an absolute authority in this matter: "To receive new insights from texts heard in a certain way in the past is not to deny the authority of God's Word but rather to affirm it and to recognize the power of God to address us ever anew" (*Christians and Jews: A Unique Relationship*, p. 6).

The issue of the authority of Scripture presents an enormous problem for the Christian theologian. The canon is not a crucial theological problem for Judaism: it is the source of the tradition, but is continuous with the flow of the ongoing tradition and not sharply separated from it (cf. the confluence of the written and oral tradition). For the Christian theologian, however, the canon occupies an exclusive position, inasmuch as it is the normative "apostolic witness" to the exclusive "once for all" event of Christ. This view implies an implicit dogmatic claim about the unity of the witness of the canon, notwithstanding its historical and literary diversity. For Christians the crucial question is whether, in their present theological reflections on Judaism, they shall accord normative canonical status to those contingent factors in the New Testament which relate to Christianity's polemic against Judaism. A false literalism and an outmoded hermeneutic, which attempts to interpret in an atomistic way selected texts in an irenic fashion, threatens to collapse the coherent-normative elements of the gospel into its contingent expressions, thus elevating those contingent expressions to a normative status and compelling Christian partners in the dialogue to "soften" up the obviously anti-Jewish sentiment of the New Testament.

In other words, a fruitful Jewish-Christian dialogue depends on a crucial *theological* decision: where do we locate the authority of the New Testament and how do we relate this authority to the Hebrew Scriptures? As to the relation of the New Testament to Tanak, a new way must be found to safeguard the authentic witness of Tanak. The various models, proposed by Christian thought, are, in one way or the other, based on the superior, if not absolutist, claim of the New Testament (cf., the law/gospel model; the allegorical/typological model [cf. the *sensus plenior* model of Roman Catholic scholarship]; the promise-fulfillment model). As long as Christian theology accords an undifferentiated canonical authority to both the coherent and contingent expressions of the New Testament and as long as Christian the-

ology absorbs and suffocates the authentic witness of Tanak, there may be irenic gestures, but there cannot be a fruitful dialogue with Judaism.

The Christian theologian, then, must face at least two issues: (1) does not our theological situation today compel us to recognize clearly the anti-Semitisms not only of the Christian tradition, but also of the New Testament itself? (2) Are these anti-Semitisms in any way commensurate with the essential coherence of the gospel? The coherence of the gospel announces the revelation of God's grace in Christ to a warped human condition, which embraces both Jews and Gentiles, and which invites both Jews and Christians to be "partners in waiting,"[7] looking forward in hope to the cosmic eschatological triumph of God, when all divisions, sufferings and injustices will cease and when all humankind will be made whole.

(iii) Some final observations:

a. The nature of the authority of the New Testament must be reformulated. A clear distinction must be made between the essential coherence of the gospel and its time-bound contingent expressions. Unless this is done, we elevate contingency into normativity and deny both the historicity of the New Testament traditions and our own historicity. The manner in which we in the 20th century interpret New Testament tradition must be radically different from that of the first generation of Christians, especially in relation to Judaism.

b. Faithfulness to the essential coherence of the gospel means for us that we cannot any longer adopt the New Testament tendencies toward Christian imperialism, the coercive imposition of our Christian conviction on others or any replacement theory of Israel by the church.

c. God's action in Christ, which anticipates the final sovereignty of God over his rebellious world, defines for Christians the coherence of the gospel. However, Christian convictions about the truth of the gospel must guard the convictions of others, in our case Judaism. Otherwise conviction transgresses into coercion and absolutist claims.

d. N. Dahl observed long ago, that virtually every book on New Testament Theology is in fact a Christology. It seems to me imperative that New Testament theologians re-think the relation between Theology and Christology. For unless the theo-centric emphasis of the New Testament is recovered, not only the relation between the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, but also the dialogue with Judaism falls apart. The essential coherence of the New Testament must be formulated in a way which

[7] Cf. Donald G. Dawe, "Partners in Waiting," April, 1985.

stresses an anticipatory Christology, i.e., Christ as the inaugurator of the blessings of God's coming kingdom (cf. 1 Thess. 2:12; 1 Cor. 1:7; 15:28; Rom. 5:1-2; 8:18-25), rather than Christ as the total "fullness of God" (Col. 1:19). Otherwise, we confuse the gift of "the first-fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23) with the possession of the full harvest and turn the basis of our dialogue with Judaism, i.e., the fact that we are "partners in waiting," into a rhetorical noise.

e. Therefore all New Testament utterances about Judaism must be evaluated against the norm of the essential coherence of the gospel. The extent to which these utterances have catalytic value for us or must be rejected by us depends on this basic evaluation.

Paul's Experience and Romans 9-11

by Alan F. Segal

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For me Paul is a trained Pharisee, an early rabbinic Jew, who left that community and joined a group of gentiles redeemed, God-fearers if you will, based on a religious experience of conversion. All of those facts are crucial for understanding what he means in any place. And those virtually unique personal facts make generalization and universalization of his message all but impossible.

Romans 9-11 is Paul's most sustained treatment of the future of Israel. His subtext is God's constancy and, I think, later God's sovereignty. Paul is clearly preaching that God's promises to Israel are still valid, but in a special way. It is the emerging failure of the Christian message to the Jewish and Jewish-Christian community that informs Paul's discussion of the purpose of Israel. The end of Romans is Paul's mature thinking about the future of Israel. Though Romans 9-11 has most often been read dogmatically as a mediation on free will and predestination, the conclusions for theology arise only secondarily, as a result of Paul's more personal ruminations about the traditional role of Israel after Christ.[1] In Galatians, Paul had been concerned to clarify that the new converts did not have to observe Torah. Here, by contrast, Paul turns to the issue of the election of Israel and the ultimate fate of the Jews. As opposed to the Galatian correspondence, where Paul's ire was directed at other Christian missionaries who did not understand the import of the gospel, the issue in Romans is not just an internal one between gentile Christians and Judaizers siding with the Jewish Christians. Paul addresses the rejection of the Christian mission *in toto* by the majority of the Jewish community. Paul's argument seems to divide neatly into thirds. First, he propounds that the failure of Israel to convert is not incompatible with God's previous promises to Israel (Rom. 9). Second, he maintains that the hardening of the Jewish hearts is due to their own lack of faith and is a response to their own guilt (Rom. 9:30-10:21). Finally, Paul maintains that the Jewish rejection of Christ will not last forever, for God will eventually show mercy and save all Israel (Rom. 11).[2]

[1] One of the only scholars to point this out is Nils A. Dahl, "The Future of Israel," *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission*, assisted by Paul Donahue (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), who has influenced my thought significantly in this section.

[2] Dahl, "Future of Israel," pp. 142-143.

These statements are offered independently, and it is not clear that they can all be held simultaneously. But philosophical consistency was not the purpose of Paul's remarks. Paul was trained as a Pharisee and continued even after his conversion to think in terms of specific situations, rather than systematic philosophy. Rather, Paul's conclusions express his sorrow that the rest of Israel has not followed him in seeing the truth of the Christian message, combined with his desire to protect the promises of the Hebrew Bible from the allegation of inconsistency, based on his novel interpretation of them. These are not theoretical issues, for both are criticisms which are plausibly leveled at him in real discussions with Jewish Christians or Jews. His basic answer is that God has not changed his mind about the promises offered to Israel; they are still valid. But the way in which they are valid must be seen in a different light after the Christ.

I

Paul states that not all who are descended from Israel belong to it. This is a natural sectarian understanding of the promises of the Hebrew Bible and illustrates how conflict enforces the pariah mentality of the sectarian. The prophets and all apocalyptic movements for which we have any literary evidence, from the book of Daniel through the Qumran community, held that only a righteous remnant of Israel would survive the coming judgment of God. There is nothing unusual in this thinking. But Paul's exegesis is quite different from those of the prophets and the apocalypticists, in the sense that he often adopts a rabbinic, midrashic approach to the Bible, which is consonant with his Pharisaic background, rather than an apocalyptic approach, which calls for unraveling of the divine plan through *pesher* or special revelation. Neither does he specify through visionary imagery how the end will come.

Yet, at the same time, Paul distinguishes between God's promise and election in a way that would be impossible for a pharisaic or rabbinic Jew. For the Pharisees and for the rabbinic movement after them, there is no contradiction between election (God's promise in choosing Israel) and the ancestry of the people. But Paul sees that gentiles have been included in the new Christian community in a surprising way that could not have been predicted from pre-Christian readings of the Hebrew Bible. For the Pharisee, gentiles could be saved as converts to the Jewish community or they could attain a moral life in their own community. This is a remarkably universal perspective, far more inclusive than the apocalypticists who saw no hope for most of Israel and all the gentiles. But for the rabbis, gentiles

and Jews could not form a single community. And that is exactly what Paul has recommended. Paul therefore cites the stories of God's pleasure with Isaac and Jacob, and his displeasure with Ishmael and Esau, as evidence that election and promise matter, but ancestry does not. Paul's usage is chiastic and opposite to the interpretation that a rabbinic Jew would have made. Whereas for the Jew it is the positive fact that God chose Isaac and Jacob, for Paul the converse fact is equally important: God disinherited Esau and Ishmael in spite of their ancestry. God's differing plan for Jacob and Esau was not based on anything they had done. God chose one and rejected the other for His own purposes.

Paul also mentions the famous ethical problem of God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart: "For this purpose have I raised you up, for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed through all the earth" (Ex. 9:16). This is a particularly apt quotation for Paul's argument, since it implies that the hardening of Jewish hearts is precisely for the purpose of showing God's power to the gentiles, that God's name may be proclaimed in all the earth (Rom. 9:17). In other words, Paul puts the non-Christian Jews of his time on the same level, not only with Ishmael and Esau but also with Pharaoh. This is a non-rabbinic conclusion, but the process of exegesis is strictly rabbinic, combining Paul's new religious perspective with the education he received in Judaism beforehand. This method is merely emphasized in Rom. 9:25-26 where the appended text from Hos. 2:23 is used to prove that God has called His people from the gentiles: "Those who were not My people, I will call 'My people,' and she who was not beloved I will call 'My beloved,' in place of saying 'You are not My people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.' " Hence the gentiles have embraced the faith whereas the majority of Israel has not. Of course, this is a description of the historical situation, as Paul saw it, not a prophecy. But the effect is that Paul's discourse in Romans comes painfully close to apostasy and would certainly have angered any Jew who was not already angered by his antinomianism. Paul risks these dangers for his new vision of community, a single community containing Jews and Christians. Paul's innovation was not to allow the gentiles into the salvation process. There is good evidence that other Jews and even some Pharisees allowed for this eventuality. Paul's innovation was to recommend that gentiles and Jews form a single community, which he called *being in Christ*.

II

Paul then begins a crucial exegesis in Rom. 10:4: "For Christ is the end (*telos*) of the Law, that everyone who has faith may be justified." Paul uses

biblical exegesis to support this strong statement. He brings two pieces of scripture which apply to the righteousness under the law and under faith respectively. He contrasts Lev. 18:5: "The person who does them will live by them" with a whole section of Deut. 30:12-14 (amplified by other passages like Deut. 9:4, Ps. 106 [107]: 26 LXX), a passage which begins: "Say not in your heart, who shall ascend to heaven?" Paul then adds his commentary: "that is to bring Christ down from above."

Anyone who has ever read the midrash will recognize Paul's midrashic method instantly. This passage is crucial for the understanding of religious choice in Israelite culture, for it is an exegesis of the passage in Deuteronomy where Moses exhorts the people to opt for the religion of the Lord. Paul, like Moses in Deuteronomy, is attempting to make his hearers understand the importance of their choice.

Like Moses, he exhorts them to choose life. He comments on "Who shall descend into the deep" with the words "to bring Christ again up from the dead." Although this may seem like an unjustified reinterpretation, its form is not unlike many other rabbinic remarks in which the relevance of the biblical passage is merely asserted. The point of the passage, however, appears in 10:8 where Paul emphasizes that the word of faith that Christ teaches is very near.

Thus, Paul has again set up a contradiction which would not have occurred to a believing Jew, for whom both passages would have applied to Torah as revealed on Sinai. But for Paul, after his conversion, the two passages conflict. On the one hand, he describes the righteousness of Torah, including all the ordinances and prohibitions, which promises life; on the other hand, he describes the righteousness of faith as close and easy to accomplish, because it is based upon accepting Christ and not on doing all the details of Jewish ceremonial law. Paul does not deny either one but tries to show that the Deuteronomy passage contains the more universal statement about God's plan for humanity, while the Leviticus passage refers only to ceremonial Torah in the most narrow sense. His point here is to make the two paths equivalent because faith is the underlying fundamental point of similarity.[3]

But the purpose of Paul's argument is not only or even primarily to eliminate Israel, rather the problem continues to be what it was always during his life: the inclusion of the gentiles into the community. Furthermore, as has become clear in his conflicts with Jewish Christians, all, not merely the

[3] Here again Paul's witness shows that rabbinic traditions, in this case, the method of reconciling scripture, can be traced to the first century, when Jewish literature will not allow us to make such confident guesses about dates.

gentiles, need to be evangelized. Clearly most of the Jewish Christians have missed the point of Christ's presence from Paul's perspective. There has never been more than a remnant saved from Israel and now they who will be saved from Israel are those who have accepted Christ. His text at this point (Rom. 10:19) is Deut. 32:1-2: "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation, I will make you angry," interpreted in context with Ps. 19:4 and Isaiah 65:1-2. He uses this catena to show that Israel has heard, has misunderstood, yet the gentiles have received the message.

In 11:1 Paul returns to his main point. Some Israelites are to be saved, as he has been, since he too is an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. The hardening of heart of most of the Jews is not incompatible with God's promises in the Bible, because the number of faithful is always small, according to scripture. Though Israel has not obtained the prize, they are not totally disqualified forever. Rather through their intransigence, the Jews will forfeit their reserved first place and gentiles will be saved before them. As opposed to his earlier statement that salvation comes to the Jews first and then to the gentiles in Romans 1 and Galatians, he now sees that salvation will come to the gentiles first and then finally to the Jews.

III

Paul begins his last argument in this section by emphasizing that he is speaking to gentiles, because he is the apostle of the gentiles. But he is speaking to the Christian community in Rome, composed of Jewish Christians and gentile Christians, not to the Jews or the unconverted gentiles. Paul says that God's promise is not removed from the Israelites. Rather, the order in which salvation is brought has been reversed. It is possible to interpret this passage as a statement of double salvation, Jews by Torah, gentiles by faith. Since the passage is meant for gentile ears, it may emphasize faith as the path of salvation for gentiles by saying that it is the equivalent of Torah, hence Torah continues to save.[4]

If so, it is quite possible to assume that what changed is merely Paul's view of righteousness and the medium of salvation *for the gentiles*. In other words, as Gaston, Gager, and Stendahl have maintained, Paul may see all to rest on faith but maintain that Jewish faith may or should still include Torah. Indeed, this was empirically true of the Christianity of Paul's day, for many Christians continued to observe Torah. Furthermore, this concept

[4] See Gager, Stendahl, Gaston.

would be in keeping with the mature rabbinic view of the second century where salvation for Jew and gentile alike is to be based upon righteousness and repentance, with the rules of law for the gentiles to exclude the special laws which apply to the Jews alone.[5]

As a Jew, I would like very must to agree with Stendahl, Gager, and Gaston that Paul never denies that salvation comes from the law. Theirs is an heroic attempt to keep the thought of Paul relevant to our society. I would like to find a way to say that Paul recognized the validity of Judaism, therefore so should Christianity after him. However I cannot do so on the basis of this passage. What I will propose here, in spite of the very persuasive arguments of Stendahl, Gager, and Gaston, is that Paul's opinion offered in Romans assumed a relatively limited period of time before the end. In this respect he was if not mistaken then at least over optimistic. But Paul never intended to be read systematically. He intended his remarks to be a specific situation at Rome and a specific time frame of salvation. He would approve of a change of emphasis if any of the terms of his opinion changed.

In Romans and throughout his writing, Paul meant *at least* that gentiles should enter the Christian community without having to perform the ceremonial law, as Jews did. This new choice offered to gentiles explains why Christianity became so attractive a possibility: it was now possible to enjoy the promises of the Hebrew Bible without having to risk the dangers or social inconveniences of adopting the special laws of Judaism.

Stendahl, Gaston, and Gager assert that Paul meant only this. Torah remains in effect for Jews; a new path is opened for gentiles. But, the idea of two separate paths—salvation for gentiles, in Christianity, and for Jews in Torah—does not gain much support from Paul's other writings, in spite of the heroic attempt of Gager, Gaston, and Stendahl to find it. Were it so, Paul could not describe himself as a suspected *transgressor*, as he does in Gal. 2:18. Paul says there that without understanding his faith others can merely say that he has left Judaism as an apostate. But Paul still considers himself a Jew, even to the end of his life, as we have just seen in Romans. In Galatians, Paul instead advocates the notion that the Torah has a chronological limi-

[5] But the church has certainly not understood Paul in this way, and Paul does not allow that the gentiles can be righteous according to less exacting regulations in Torah, a concept of universality that would evolve in Judaism and Christianity. As we shall see, the important questions of the value of Judaism and Torah after the Christ event are not answered by Paul directly or, more exactly, they are answered by Paul in several possibly contradictory ways, depending upon the specific question he is addressing. Paul's personal experience after conversion is what most affected both his theoretical thinking about the new basis for Christian community and the value of Torah within it.

tation, being added for transgressions (Gal. 3:19) and later to be replaced by faith as maturity replaces tutelage (Gal. 2:23-4). In Romans, with its Jewish Christian majority, he does not stress this idea.[6]

Galatians 2 is the key to deciding whether Paul means that faith should exclude Torah for all or only for gentiles. The affirmation in Galatians 2:15-16 appears to be that *all* will be justified by faith. Thus Torah cannot be important for justification in Christianity:[7]

> We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not gentile sinners, yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by the works of the law shall no one be justified.

Paul says here not only that he and his Jewish Christian compatriots know that salvation is by faith but they all have, like him, given up the Law as a means of salvation. Paul seems to be saying that is was his faith in Christ, based on his conversion experience, which made him feel righteous, and which justified him. This conversion experience, radical or gradual as it may have been, had nothing specific to do with "works of the law," the observances of Judaism. Indeed, as a Pharisee interested in the moral life of God-fearers he might have said a similar thing. But Paul seems to have learned the meaning of his Christian life most fully from his gentile congregations; he holds up his own experience and those of other Jewish Christians who have taken up residence in the gentile community and given up conscientious practice of ceremonial law. For Paul, something critical happened to the Torah, based upon Christ's saving death. Paul knows that Torah must still somehow be true, because it comes from God and is necessary for understanding the meaning of Christ's mission and victory. However, he posits another change, that the *complete* Torah law need not be the standard of righteousness, at least for the gentiles. But because he is talking of himself

[6] One may argue, as do Stendahl, Gaston, and Gager, that Paul is not talking about Torah for Jewish Christians at all, but only its use for gentiles, or that he is primarily trying to gain acceptance for his new concept of faith. To be sure, he *is* speaking *for* gentiles in this passage and emphasizing that their faith is no less strong or important or salvific than the Judaizers', even though they do not have the law. Nevertheless, he makes some very strong statements, which go beyond anything he need say to gentiles if his only purpose is to make a new path of faith parallel to the path of law, as appears already to be the case for God-fearers.

[7] See Hans Huebner, *Law in Paul's Thought*, p. 1 for a succinct discussion of the strength of this statement in Galatians. Like Huebner, Raeisaenen and Sanders, I will try to show that Paul's view changes, but my understanding of the dialectic differs, because unlike them, I see Paul as speaking about communal groups, not about an abstract analysis of the value of moral action from the point of view of God's plan.

and his Jewish colleagues, he appears to be saying more. The context itself seems to imply more than Stendahl, Gaston, and Gager are willing to admit.

This is the ambiguity: we know that when he talks about the works of the law, he is talking about the ceremonial laws of Judaism. When he says: "By the works of the law shall all (*pasa*) not be justified" (Gal. 2:16), he can mean either or both of two things. Although it has most often been taken to mean *no one* shall be justified by law, it literally says that *not* by works of law shall *all* men be justified.[8] So it is possible that Paul here means to set up a second possibility for salvation, faith, without denying the validity of the first, Torah or Law for all. Or perhaps the two contradictory passages are resolved chronologically: though the Torah and faith are both part of God's plan, the Torah was only valid until faith replaced it, just as had happened in Paul's own life. The problem is central to Paul's theology but may well be insolvable, given his disposition for bold statements.[9]

Paul begins by speaking personally. He tells why he converted and ends with the general statement about the exclusive value of faith for justification. Most of Paul's important meditations on Torah likewise begin from his personal experience and end in a generalization about the value of Law universally, based on that experience. Here the answer is that the law can justify no one: "because by the works of the law (*ceremonial rules of Torah*) shall no one be justified" (2:16). The meaning of justification is underlined by Paul's statement in Gal. 3:21 that "if a law had been given which could make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by the Law." In this context, Paul's understanding of justification is influenced by the ultimate purpose of justification—salvation through resurrection.

Lloyd Gaston has pointed out that the phrase "works of the law" is an allusion to Psalm 143:2, which Paul then quotes in good rabbinic fashion. For Gaston and Gager, the resulting translation then becomes: "We too became believers in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified from the faithfulness of Christ and not from works of law, because [as it is written:] by works of law *all* flesh is not justified (Ps. 143:2)."[10] Gager and Gaston are surely right in cautioning us against relying on received translations

[8] See Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*; Heikki Raeisaenen, *Law*, pp. 18-23; Hans Huebner, *Law in Paul's Thought*, pp. 151-154.

[9] A number of passages have been seen by scholars as intimating that the Law has been abolished: Rom. 7:1-10, Gal. 2:16, 2:19, 2 Cor. 3:4-17, and Eph. 2:14-16. On the other hand, there are a number of passages which contradict the assumption: Rom. 7:6, 3:31, Rom. 7:22, and Rom. 13:8-10. The way to understand the seeming contradiction is to look at the limitations which he defines in each context.

[10] See Lloyd Gaston, "Paul and the Torah," *Paul and the Torah*, and John Gager, *Origins*, p. 233.

too much and in showing that Paul is using the verse in a rabbinic way. But, as anyone who has studied rabbinic literature knows, and as we have just seen in regard to another of Paul's exegeses in Galatians, rabbinic method does not commit Paul to interpreting the verse as the Hebrew Bible would, or even to the often differing interpretation of the Septuagint. And it certainly does not commit Paul to a rabbinic conclusion. The meaning of the verse for all the exegetes of this period did not inhere to any historical arguments about what the verse must have meant to the writers long ago, for the entire work was held to be the medium of divine revelation. Any acceptable meaning derived from the text, no matter how ingenious, was valued as revelation. The rabbis delighted in finding as many (acceptable) meanings as possible. By comparison, Paul seems to have a one-track mind because he speaks out of a complex and specific social situation from the point of view of a person who had had an overwhelming spiritual experience.

Paul's meaning to exclude everyone from salvation through the observance of Jewish law comes out in comparison with other places where he used the same phrases. Paul clearly intends to include all humanity in the term *flesh*, as he does so many places elsewhere. For instance, in Romans 2, where Paul is speaking about Law and where he addresses mostly gentile and some Jewish Christians, Paul used the word *anthropos*, meaning all of humanity. *Sarx* (flesh) and *anthropos* (humanity) are indeed synonyms in the Bible; like the Hebrew Bible, Paul characteristically uses *flesh* to refer to all humanity without faith. Those who are converted through *summorphosis* have a spiritual body and are in the Christ, as Enoch is in the Son of Man (1 Enoch 71). Again, we see that Paul has adopted a language of opposition to describe the distinction between the converted and the unconverted. This language states clearly that all people must be converted.

In Romans, Paul means to condemn both gentiles and Jews equally. There is no reason to suppose that Paul exempts Jews at this moment. The same appears to be true in Galatians. He means to include both Jews and gentiles in those who are excused from doing Torah. In Gal. 2:16, Paul further uses the words "*ean me, unless* . . . [he is justified] through faith in Christ" to underline his clear meaning.

I cannot see that Paul means anything else but to exclude all humanity from relying on ceremonial Torah observance, by which Paul appears to mean special laws, for salvation. Paul was trying to make a specific point about the generality of faith. He uses himself and other Jewish Christian missionizers as examples of people who have come to the right conclusion.

Paul uses the words "*ou . . . pasa sarx*" literally "not . . . all flesh," in its sense of no one, no *person* or *human being*, to characterize those who are saved by "works of law," ceremonial observance. One cannot make this term mean *not all . . . flesh*, hence excluding gentiles from those who are made righteous by law, as Gaston and Gager do. Paul means that ceremonial Torah is of no significance for salvation for *anyone*.

And a double plan for salvation does not seem to be the point in Romans 9-11, as Paul's sad tone for the stubbornness of the Jews shows. The figure of the wild olive illustrates his hopes, which is that some Jews will be saved by the provocation of the inclusion of the gentiles and follow the gentiles into the church. Some of the olive branches are broken off, and a wild olive is grafted on. The broken branches must be the unconverted part of Israel, while the root must be the converted Israelites. One wonders whether Paul might not have excluded a good many Jewish-Christians, who upheld the cultic differences between gentiles and Jews, for they demonstrated lack of faith as well. He might have, but he refrains from this conclusion, probably because he wishes to counsel church unity in his letter to a very mixed community of Jewish Christians and gentile Christians at Rome. Only the faithful will inherit the promises. The faithful acknowledge the special process of transformation beginning in the world. It is to them that the gentiles will be grafted and they should not boast of their understanding of faith. Paul only equates the faithful in Christ who observe Torah with the faithful in Christ who do not observe Torah. Paul argues that Jewish-Christians (with faith) and gentile Christians (with faith) are equal, not that Jews and Christians are equal. That is the meaning of his previous statement in Rom. 10:12-13 "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows His riches upon all who call upon Him. For 'Every one who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' "

From my point of view, it would be better to take this statement literally, as the rabbis did, that all who fear the Lord (and therefore act justly) are assured a place in the world to come. However, in this passage Paul is implying something else, that the name of God is Jesus the Christ, as he himself had discovered in his ecstatic metamorphosis.[11] On the other hand, Paul

[11] For apocalypticism and Jewish mysticism as we have seen, YHWH, the Lord, the proper name of God could signify God's principal angelic manifestation, His Glory. Paul had seen that Glory of God in a vision, just as Ezekiel had seen the human figure of God on his throne approach from His temple in Jerusalem and join the exiles on the banks of the Chebar river. The difference is that Paul had identified that Glory of God as the Christ. Relying on Jewish mystical tradition and his private revelation that the Christ is the principal mediator of God; Paul is interpreting the name of the Lord to be Christ and faith to be faith in Christ exclusively.

does not draw a detailed picture of what he envisions at the end of time, when some of Israel will embrace Christianity.

Paul implies that only those who accept Christ will be saved, a momentous statement about the future of Israel; but, strangely, he does not actually state it. Paul's refusal to spell out the implications of his reasoning is extremely important. Having virtually committed himself to the proposition that only a remnant of Israel will be retained, the standard apocalyptic notion, he then surprisingly asserts the rabbinic notion that all Israel will be saved (11:26). That doctrine, which appears in rabbinic literature in Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1, is thus proven to be first-century Jewish thought as well. It also demonstrates Paul's continuing allegiance to major aspects of the rabbinic understanding of Torah, in spite of his conversion. But, at this point, it adds mystery (11:25) not logical clarity to Paul's discussion. Rather than merely abandon the unbelieving members of the Jewish community, Paul asserts that God's promises to them are still intact: "For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable" (11:29). Of course, he hopes that the remaining Jews will come to Christ as he did, freely and without coercion. Paul is not writing theory so much as reflecting on his experience of the failure of the Jewish mission. Though the mission to the Jews has been a failure, God will eventually reveal why at the proper time. Therefore, there need not be a continuing Christian mission to the Jews.

Paul does not state exactly how the process of redemption for Jews will come about. The ambiguity appears to be deliberate, as it is in line with Paul's theme of the sovereignty of God. Probably Paul had not received a direct revelation specifying the future, thus he does not indulge in apocalyptic forecasting. Instead, Paul tries to answer the question, as the rabbis would, by pondering the meaning of scripture. But, if Paul were interpreting scripture like a rabbi, he would have to admit that other, even opposing interpretations could be just as valid midrashically. Individual rabbis interpreting scripture knew that they were but one voice in a chorus of exegesis.

Paul's silence, his deliberate ambiguity, is as important as his exegesis, because Paul obviously does not want to impinge on the sovereignty of God in spelling out how God intends to fulfill biblical promises, when he himself has not been informed of a surety. Furthermore, Paul warns his gentile converts not to boast about their status, for God's judgment is unsearchable and His ways are inscrutable (11:33). Though Paul anticipates the conclusion and is convinced of its speedy arrival, he does not state it explicitly, because to do so would presume to influence God's actions, which is a mistake of pride. To demonstrate his point he quotes Isaiah and Job (11:34-35)

to the effect that no one can know God's plan or influence God's actions: "For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been God's counselor?" (Is. 40:13); "Or who has given a gift to God that he might be repaid?" (Job 35:7). Without explicit revelatory knowledge, Paul saw that it was pride to suggest how God intended to fulfill the promises to Israel.

IV

As a believing Jew and as a twentieth-century humanist, I could have hoped for a different outcome of Paul's interpretation of these passages. The theology outlined by Stendahl, Gaston, and Gager makes more sense for today than does Paul's actual conclusion. It would have been easier for today's Christianity had Paul embraced cultural pluralism more fully. But I do not believe that Paul meant his remarks to be prophecy for the necessary future of Israel so much as a description of the historical situation which he saw. He was a product of his past in the Pharisaic Jewish community and his present in the gentile Christian community. It is easy to see how a person with Paul's experience of metamorphosis—from a member of a strict Jewish sect to a member of a gentile Christian community—would set out as his career the representation of the rights of gentile Christianity, risking all to bring the communities together and failing, would have ended his meditation in this way. Gager, Gaston, and Stendahl represent Paul accurately in this way. His point was the inclusion of the gentiles, not the exclusion of the Jews. But like any apocalypticist Jew of his day, Paul excludes those Jews who do not share his faith.

In other words, it would not be wise to overinterpret what Paul meant to say in this passage. Paul was not writing an eternal, systematic theology. He was trying to understand the meaning of events in the way that any pious Jew of his day would have done: by consulting scripture and comparing it with his experience. He was advocating a view of social reality. He had personally experienced a vision of Christ, followed by a successful career evangelizing the gentiles, while at the same time seeing the largely unsuccessful attempt to evangelize the Jews. To his disappointment and horror what he experienced was the Jewish-Christian and Jewish opposition to his view of life. Paul's interpretations of biblical passages are meant to be meditations on these events, which he had experienced, not explicit prophecies of the ultimate fate and destiny of history.

Nor did what Paul expect actually happen. His journey to Jerusalem and Rome did not change the minds of Jews or Jewish Christians. Nor did it prompt their conversion to his vision of community. Quite the contrary. If

Acts is correct, he spent two years imprisoned in Caesarea; his appeal to Rome evidently did not end in his exoneration or the unification of that prosperous Jewish community into a single Jewish and gentile Christian community. The peculiar and ambiguous reference in Suetonius to the uproar among the Jews at the instigation of a man mistakenly called Chrestus rather than Christus (*impulsore Chresto*) shows that at Rome the conflict between Christians and Jews had already deteriorated to the point of becoming evident to the authorities. Paul's resolution would have incited rather than quieted the conflict.

Israel as a whole has not shown any interest in accepting as God's principal angel the Christ whom Paul saw in his conversion experience. Nor has Judaism at large seen itself to be part of a gigantic transformation process mystically identified with that angel. Nor has the *parousia* happened. N. A. Dahl has pointed out that the only thing which has surely happened is the very thing against which Paul warned: gentile Christianity has boasted of its special knowledge at the expense of Israel. Therefore Paul's major warning against boasting in Romans has gone unheeded. Such an outcome would have saddened Paul the more. But, in N. A. Dahl's opinion, it probably would not have surprised him, for underlying this section of Romans is the point that God's grace is mysterious. He is the one God, God of Jews and gentiles. Though God is faithful and just, no human being knows how he will perform his promises. His ways are not our ways.

However, we live in a different world than Paul's. We live in a world which is threatened with destruction not by God's direct hand, but by our own, a demonic mankind come of age. In this world people of all faiths appear much more similar than Paul could have appreciated. What has happened in the interim is that Christian unity has been achieved, after a fashion. What is really called for now is the recognition that all peoples of faith share a community, no matter how different that faith may look externally. This can be appreciated by giving up the idea that Paul was outlining a systematic theology for all time. Paul was merely surveying a problem as he saw it. It was his call to give up pride which should still be heeded.

It is time to remember what Paul never forgot, that he was trying as best he could in the context of the events he had witnessed to understand what God's plan was. But he never prided himself by saying that he had found a single unalterable interpretation. He never read a text as gospel without comparing it with his experience. Nor did he express himself in a way that made one analysis of the events he witnessed necessary and negated all his previous ones. Rather he suggested several different interpretations of

events based on his experience, without giving us many hints about the circumstances that produced his realizations.

Paul's discussions of Judaism change radically when read by a church with a comfortable majority of gentiles, a church not tempted to return to the law. Paul's angry rhetoric trying to gain a hearing for his opinion begins to sound like a radical condemnation of Torah and Judaism, which it never was. But over time, the historical context of Paul's writing was lost. Without the historical context many readers lose track of Paul the person, Paul the Jew, and Paul the convert. As a consequence, they completely misunderstand the program of Paul the Apostle, wrongly concluding that Paul's difficulty with Judaism was intellectual and theological—for instance, interpreting Paul as primarily opposing Judaism because it practiced self-salvation and volition.[12] But Paul had been a Pharisee and he knew that Judaism was not mere boasting in human accomplishments. Judaism was a response to God's prior action of justification, as was his new faith. Both Paul and the rabbis cautioned against pride. Like any Jew of his day, Paul was interested in conforming his actions to God's desires. His experience gave him a unique (and from the point of view of Judaism apostate) perspective of what God's desires were, but his purpose was the same as a rabbi's: to understand what rites and actions God demanded of those living in His community.

In significant ways Paul's letter to the Romans is a meditation on Deuteronomy 30 in which Moses offers Israel the choice between life and death. The rabbis too found that Deuteronomy 30 was a major statement of their beliefs. They used it in liturgy and midrash, as Paul did, to call their people to a moment of decision and commitment. It has just been read in the synagogue on the sabbath before Rosh Hashanah, to awaken the people to their moral purposes. The rabbis' view of Israel's purpose was that it continue to be a people apart in a world which gradually learns from them what morality is. But the decisions upon which human morality was based were available to all humanity, even without their mission. Their object was to serve as God's priests and perhaps to influence others by populating their spiritualized, internalized Jerusalem, as a city set on a hill.

The object of faith for Paul was salvation from death, eternal life in Christ. As a Jew, Paul knew that it was easier to define what was moral for

[12] They see Paul's discussion of *justification* as a philosophical analysis, instead of a new way of talking about a conversion experience to which both the repentant and the virtuous must submit. They see *election* as a concept of supersession instead of a way to discuss God's grace to Jew and gentile alike.

humanity than to presume to understand what God would do in the future. Both the rabbis and Paul, no matter the depths of their other disagreements, saw that a decision to choose life meant to choose life in community.

Paul's Christian career began with his ecstatic experience of the Lord. It was this vision that convinced him of the transformation of all believers. He sought to realize that vision in his career as an apostle, understanding the meaning of being *in Christ* as the events of his life unfolded. Though he used all his intellectual gifts and his education both as an orator and a Pharisee, he did not have the confidence in reason which systematic theologians have attributed to him. He began his career because of an experience, a conversion. His mystical vision of metamorphosis left much unexplained. He began as a Pharisee and became a convert *from* Pharisaism. He spent the rest of life trying to express what he converted *to*. He never gave it a single name. Whatever it was, he never felt he left Judaism. Like the early rabbis, Paul understood that God's ways are mysterious, hence human understanding must always leave room for ambiguities. Paul and the rabbis understood as well as anyone before or after that the truths inherent in the biblical text are manifold, complex, and sometimes opposing. Scripture is a gem that gives off a different glint each time it is turned in the light of analysis. It is time for us to realize the same. Perhaps no single point of view can do scripture justice.

Paul and the Law: How Complete was the Departure?*

by Bernadette J. Brooten

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Paul makes a succinct statement concerning the law in Rom. 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified (τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι)."[1] Rom. 9-11 demonstrates eloquently, however, that Paul's struggle concerning the law was not an abstract one. Rather, Paul's questions about the law are about its relationship to the people of Israel, namely, how have they kept it, and do all believers in Christ need to follow them in keeping the law? Further, if salvation is through Christ, what of the promises God made to the Israelite people? Paul's conflicts concerning the people of Israel play themselves out particularly acutely in the practical questions of Torah observance, such as dietary laws and circumcision.

Interpreters writing within a wide variety of theological frameworks have long recognized the tensions in Paul's thought concerning the Jewish law. On the surface, it is difficult to reconcile such views as: Christ as the end of the law (Rom. 10:4); sin as dead without the law (Rom. 7:8); law as having come to increase the trespass (Rom. 5:20); the law as unnecessary in dietary matters (1 Cor. 8, 10; Gal. 2:11-14; Rom. 14); and circumcision as unnecessary (Gal. 5:2-12, Rom. 2:25-29; 1 Cor. 7:19, etc.), with Paul's affirmation that he upholds the law (Rom. 3:31) or that "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good" (Rom. 7:12).[2] Some scholars maintain that there are genuine inconsistencies in Paul's thought. Heikki Räisänen, for example, sees a development in Paul's thinking; at first the law was an *adiaphoron* (an indifferent matter) for Paul, but later, pressure from his Jewish-Christian opponents drove him to argue for the total abrogation of the law. E. P. Sanders argues that Paul held that people are not

* Thanks are due to those who have assisted me in various ways with this paper: Denise Buell, Ruth Clements, Sara Hazel, and Laurel Schneider. I also especially wish to thank Joel Marcus for his thoughtful response paper at the 1989 Neumann Symposium.

[1] The English translations throughout the paper are those of the Revised Standard Version. Citations of the Greek text are from Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 26th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1979).

[2] For a concise summary of the anomalies in Paul's thought on the law, see Heikki Räisänen, *The Torah and Christ*, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 45 (Helsinki: Kirjapaino Raamattutalo, 1986), pp. 8f.

admitted into the body of Christ by the law, but that Christian conduct must be scripturally based.[3]

Others argue that a deeper look at Paul's letters reveals a center to his thinking through which one can interpret the seemingly inconsistent passages. Ernst Käsemann or Peter Stuhlmacher, for example, see justification by faith or the justification of the godless as the center of Pauline thought, while W. D. Davies and Joseph Fitzmyer see Christ as its center. Krister Stendahl argues that Western theologians have read Paul too individualistically and so have missed that Paul's primary concern was with the salvation of the Gentiles as a group of people, rather than with any individual agonizing over the Jewish law. According to Stendahl, Paul held that Jews may keep the law, but that Gentiles need not keep it. Johan Christiaan Beker has more recently suggested that a model of coherence and contingency can help us to see the structure of Paul's thought. Beker argues that Paul used an apocalyptic framework as a means by which to interpret the Christ-event, that is, Christ is "the proleptic fulfillment of the triumph of God." Paul applied this to the situations of particular communities.[4]

The purpose of this paper is to examine hints that, despite his occasional claims to the contrary, Paul's departure from the law in questions of observance was by no means complete or uniform. I am suggesting that Paul chose certain areas of behavior in which he was willing to break sharply with the law, and others in which he surprisingly continued to advocate what the law advocated. I will examine two types of evidence: direct appeals to the law, and patterns of the law underlying certain Pauline passages. My thesis is that while Paul broke sharply with Jewish dietary laws and with the Jewish commandment of circumcision in order to open the Christian

[3] Heikki Räisänen, *Torah and Christ*; idem, *Paul and the Law*, WUNT 29 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1983); E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977); and idem, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983).

[4] Ernst Käsemann, " 'The Righteousness of God' in Paul," *New Testament Questions of Today*, tr. W. J. Montague (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), pp. 168-82; idem, *Perspectives on Paul*, tr. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971); Peter Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus*, FRLANT 87; 2d ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966); W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*, 4th ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); idem, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Paul and his Theology: A Brief Sketch*, 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1989); Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976); J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), p. 351; idem, "Paul's Theology: Consistent or Inconsistent?" *NTS* 34 (1988), pp. 364-77 (argues against the very concept of "center"). For a review of the wider scholarly discussion, see Joseph Plevnik, "The Center of Pauline Theology," *CBQ* 51 (1989), pp. 461-78.

congregation to Gentiles, in several other areas, especially that of gender roles and gender relations, Paul continued to be indebted to the Torah as a practical guide. In the passages which I will discuss, the Jewish law, rather than Roman or Greek law, makes the most sense as the reference point. Paul, as a former Pharisee, was trained in the Jewish law. He quotes from the Bible frequently, but never makes direct and unmistakable reference to Roman or Greek law. Further, I will demonstrate that a clear distinction between the moral and the ritual content of the law cannot be drawn or used to explain Paul's continuity and discontinuity with the law.[5] Finally, concepts and precepts of the book of Leviticus—perhaps surprisingly—are in the background of Paul's teaching at several points.

At the outset let me clarify: I am not arguing that Paul "fell back onto" his Jewish upbringing in matters concerning gender, nor that he was unable to escape restrictive gender roles taught to him as a child. Judaism in the Roman period actually showed considerable diversity in matters of gender. Paul, as a Jew traveling throughout the Roman empire, had the opportunity to see many Jews and non-Jews living their lives in more and less egalitarian ways and the opportunity to choose where he would place himself on the spectrum.

I. Direct Appeals to the Torah

The undisputed Pauline letters (Rom., 1-2 Cor., Gal., Phil., 1 Thess., Philem.) contain several direct appeals to the Jewish law. Paul assumes the abiding validity of the decalogue at several points (Rom. 2:21f; 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14; see also Rom. 7:7). Scholars have usually not perceived a contradiction between Paul's doctrine of justification by faith and his acknowledgement that the decalogue is valid. The decalogue is seen to be in the realm of moral, rather than ritual, law, and interpreters often assume that Paul understood the decalogue to be a fundamental guide for Christian living, rather than a path to salvation.[6] Note that Lev. 19:18 ("you shall love your neighbor as yourself") is quoted in both Gal. 5:14 and Rom. 13:9 (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν).

1 Cor. 14:34 (αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν· οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν, ἀλλὰ ὑποτασσέσθωσαν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ νό-

[5] Heikki Räisänen, for different reasons, also argues that distinguishing between ritual and moral does not explain Paul's apparent inconsistencies with respect to the law (*Paul and the Law*, 23-28).

[6] E.g., Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, ed. and tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 360-62.

μος λέγει.) is the most explicit appeal to the Jewish law.[7] I will argue that the Torah does not contain a command that women be subordinate, but that a number of the commandments enforce subordination in several areas of women's lives. I will also observe that the Torah does not contain a general command to women to be silent. Finally, I will suggest that the arguments presented on behalf of the interpolation hypothesis are inconclusive. Since discussion of whether 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 is a non-Pauline interpolation usually preempts actual interpretation of the passage, I will begin by discussing several exegetical problems before turning to the question of authenticity.

The context in 1 Cor. 14 is paraenesis concerning church order. In its present form, v. 26 constitutes an introduction. In vv. 27f, those speaking in tongues are instructed as to order and interpretation. Vv. 29-32 concern prophets. V. 33a (or all of v. 33) constitutes an intermediate summary statement. Vv. 33b-36 (or vv. 34f or vv. 34-36) concern women speaking in the assembly. They are told not to speak, and, if they have any questions, to ask their husbands at home. Vv. 37f establish the authority of the teaching by appeal to a command from the Lord and by not recognizing those who disagree. Vv. 39f summarize the passage. Three groups are enjoined to be silent: those speaking in tongues without an interpreter (v. 28); prophets, when a revelation is made to another person sitting by (v. 30); and women (v. 34).

The exegetical problems include: Why does Paul appeal to the law? Why does he command women to be silent, whereas only a few chapters previous, he assumes their right to pray and prophesy (1 Cor. 11:5)? What is the ecclesiological significance of the command that women be silent, i.e., what effect might it have had on women and on the whole church, not only in later generations, but also in its own day? Are unmarried women allowed to speak? Does the Jewish law command women to be subordinate? Does it prohibit women from speaking in an assembly? Paul's appeal to the law is puzzling and is one of the reasons why scholars have adopted the inter-

[7] I use the term "law" to translate νόμος in Paul and in other Jewish authors of the period (Philo, Josephus, etc.). Does Paul use νόμος here to refer to the Pentateuch, i.e., the written Torah? In rabbinic Judaism, which had precedents in this period, but which only emerged fully as a movement after the destruction of the Second Jerusalem Temple, Torah was categorized as Written Torah (the Pentateuch or the whole bible) and Oral Torah (the oral sayings passed down by the rabbis). In Paul's time, several Jewish groups with trained legal specialists (the Pharisees; the Sadducees; the Essenes, to which the men of Qumran probably belonged; such allegorists as Philo of Alexandria; and probably others) engaged in heated disputes over legal questions. Paul's legal opinions are part of this larger process of discerning the proper way to follow the Jewish law.

polation hypothesis. A further reason is the contradiction between 1 Cor. 11:5 and 1 Cor. 14:34.

The Pentateuch contains neither a general nor an explicit injunction that women be subordinate. Paul may have been thinking of Gen. 3:16, in which God says to the woman after the fall that she will bear children in pain, that her desire will be for her husband, and that her husband will rule over her (LXX: αὐτός σου κυριεύσει); but the statement that the fall will result in the husband's ruling over the wife is, in fact, not a command to her to be subordinate. Flavius Josephus states that, according to the law, the woman is inferior to the man in every respect, and that she is to be subject, not so that she be mistreated, but in order that she be ruled, for God has given sovereignty to the man. (*Contra Apionem* 2.24 §201: γυνὴ χείρων, φησίν, ἀνδρὸς εἰς ἅπαντα. τοιγαροῦν ὑπακουέτω, μὴ πρὸς ὕβριν, ἀλλ' ἵν' ἄρχηται· θεὸς γὰρ ἀνδρὶ τὸ κράτος ἔδωκεν.)[8] By using the term ὕβρις, which can designate a violent act or outrage against a person, Josephus implicitly recognizes that violence often accompanies subordination. Like the statement in 1 Cor. 14:34, the general statement of Josephus cannot be traced back to a particular commandment within the Pentateuch.

Does the law say that women are to be subordinate and that woman is inferior to man in every respect? Several features of the Torah can be construed in this way. The commandments, within whichever legal code or redactional stratum, are primarily stated in the masculine form, leaving the reader, both ancient and modern, at a loss as to which apply to women and men, and which only to men. The later rabbinic solution to the problem of exclusive language is to apply all the negative and the positive non-time-bound precepts to both women and men, and the positive time-bound precepts to men only. The author of 1 Cor. 14:34 and Josephus may have had marriage law in mind, which is characterized in the Pentateuch by a radical gender asymmetry. Upon marriage, a woman is bound by law to restrict her sexual intercourse to her husband, whereas her husband is only as restricted in his choice of other female sexual partners as he was before marriage. For example, according to Deut. 22:22, a married woman found having intercourse with any other man is to suffer the death penalty; no account is taken whether the incident was rape or whether she chose it. The man lying with her is to die as well. However, the death penalty applies only for the man who has intercourse with the wife of another Israelite man. If a married

[8] H. St. J. Thackeray, Ralph Marcus, and Louis H. Feldman, eds. and tr., *Josephus*, 9 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1926-65), 1 (1926), p. 372; Benedikt Niese, ed., *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, 7 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1887, 1885-95), 5 (1889), p. 83.

man has intercourse with a foreigner, a slave, a divorced woman, a prostitute or a virgin, he has not committed adultery against his own wife. In sum, if an Israelite male has intercourse with the wife of another Israelite male, he is to suffer the death penalty, while if the wife of an Israelite male has intercourse with any other male, she is to die. In other words, a man could theoretically rape a slave girl and suffer no penalty, while his wife could be raped and suffer the death penalty.[9]

Paul shows full awareness of this asymmetry in marriage law when he uses the illustration of a married woman in Rom. 7:2f:

> Thus a married woman (ὕπανδρος γυνή) is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man [ἐὰν γένηται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ—this could also simply mean "has intercourse with another man"] while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

The asymmetry is expressed at the outset with the term ὕπανδρος, "under a man," the meaning of which is somewhat obscured by the translation "married." Further, the illustration is not reversible, that is, a wife is bound to a husband, but a husband is not bound by law not to have intercourse with another woman. Paul does not—and cannot—use the hypothetical term "under a woman," ὑπογυναικός, to refer to a married man. The wife will be called an adulteress if she has intercourse with another man, any other man. He will not be called an adulterer if he has intercourse with any other woman, but rather only if she is the wife of another man and therefore ὕπανδρος herself. He cannot by law take a woman who is under another man. Paul's choice of the unequal relationship of marriage to illustrate the human relationship to the law demonstrates that he knew that the law is highly gendered, i.e., that gender is a very important organizing category and distinguishing factor in the law.

Such a general assessment of the gendered nature of the Torah does not, however, solve individual problems. For example, the interpreter of Paul searching the Torah for a prohibition to women against speaking in the

[9] See Deut. 22:23-29 (betrothed and unbetrothed virgins); Lev. 18:20; 20:10. See also Lev. 19:20, which prescribes a relatively mild punishment for a man who has intercourse with a slave-woman who is betrothed to another man. Presumably there is a punishment at all because she is betrothed to another man. See Jacob Milgrom, "The Betrothed Slave-girl, Lev. 19:20-22," *ZAW* 89 (1977), pp. 43-50. By Paul's time, these laws had undergone considerable interpretation; see the excellent study by Judith Romney Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah* (New York: Oxford, 1988).

assembly will search in vain. The Christian prohibition in 1 Cor. 14:34 is not derived from any extant biblical or post-biblical Jewish source and must be seen either as a Christian reading of the Torah or as a Christian innovation.[10] We do not have evidence that the silencing of women was general synagogue practice in this period.

The ecclesiological significance of the silencing of women is the most important, and most overlooked, exegetical-historical problem. Since this paper focuses on the question of the law, I can only suggest avenues of research: examination of the few sources in antiquity written or composed by women (including private letters, legal petitions and other documentary papyri) to ascertain areas of discourse not represented or underrepresented in male writings; examination of the anthropological-structural significance of silencing half of a community; analysis of the relationship between speaking and authority; and study of early patristic interpretation of 1 Cor. 14:33b-36.[11]

The arguments for the interpolation hypothesis are:

1. It is un-Pauline to appeal to the law;

2. Prohibiting women to speak contradicts 1 Cor. 11:5, which restricts women's dress, but assumes women's public prayer and prophecy;

3. Some ancient witnesses, mostly Western, place vv. 34f after 14:40 (D, F, G, 88*, $it^{ar[61], b[89], d, e, f, g}$, vg^{ms}, Ambrosiaster, Sedulius-Scotus);

4. The verses constitute a break in the discussion, which otherwise reads smoothly without it;

5. The vocabulary and content are similar to 1 Tim. 2:11-15; the author of the Pastoral Epistles could have added these verses when editing the Pauline Corpus.

Although many critical scholars take vv. 34f as an interpolation, the mat-

[10] For evidence for Jewish women who served as leaders in synagogues in the Roman and early Byzantine periods, some of whose functions probably included speaking in assemblies, see Bernadette J. Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues*, Brown Judaic Studies 36 (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1982). This book also includes discussion of post-biblical Jewish interpretation of the ancient Israelite leaders Deborah and Miriam, as well as of Jewish sources of the Roman period which limit women's speaking.

[11] Cf. the treatise *On the Trinity* (3.41.3; *PG* 39.988C-989A) attributed to Didymus the Blind, in which 1 Tim. 2:12-14 (on women not being permitted to teach) and 1 Cor. 11:5 (on a woman dishonoring her head when she prays or prophesies) are interpreted to mean that a woman is not allowed to write books on her own authority. Such views as this have probably placed early Christian women's writings under male names and resulted in fewer early Christian women expressing their faith through the written word. For a translation and discussion of this passage, see Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Word, Spirit and Power: Women in Early Christian Communities," in Rosemary Radford Ruether and Eleanor McLaughlin, eds., *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), p. 42f.

ter seems to me to be inconclusive.[12] While Paul does not usually appeal to the law, scholars do not take the statements supporting the law in Rom. 3:31 and 7:12 to be interpolations. Further, the contradiction between 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Cor. 11:5 is no greater than the tensions in Pauline thinking at a more theoretical level concerning the law and salvation. Consider, for example, that the same person who wrote that justification is by faith and not the works of the law (Rom. 3:28), also closes vice catalogues with such statements as these: "those who do such things deserve to die" (Rom. 1:32); the immoral, idolaters, adulterers, etc. "will [not] inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:10); and "those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21). What is justification if not entry into the gracious reign of God? Thus, resolving the contradiction between 1 Cor. 11:5 and 1 Cor. 14:34 does not leave the reader with a contradiction-free Paul. Perhaps taking vv. 34f as original will force us to a more realistic, if less harmonious, picture of Paul.[13]

The transposition of the verses in some witnesses could point to a *Vorlage* without them and is perhaps the most serious reason for assuming an interpolation. A scribe could, however, have altered the order. If the verses were an interpolation, one might expect to find greater regional distribution of those witnesses indicating a problem. Note that in all extant witnesses the verses are present.

[12] For a different view from what I am presenting here and a good overview of the discussion, see Winsome Munro, "Women, Text and the Canon: The Strange Case of 1 Corinthians 14:33-35," *BTB* 18:1 (1988), pp. 26-31. Munro attempts to recognize fully the passage's negative implications, taking it as a clue to the kind of egalitarian community it argues against, both of which are convincing points. Munro, however, takes it as an interpolation, of which I am less certain.

[13] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has suggested that 1 Cor. 14:34 is original and refers to married women, while 1 Cor. 11:5 may refer to celibate women, to whom Paul may have granted a certain preference, as 1 Cor. 7:32-35 indicates. She notes that, since several early Christian leaders were married women (Prisca, and possibly Junia and Apphia), Paul was probably aware that this instruction would meet with opposition, hence the sharp tone of v. 36 (*In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* [New York: Crossroad, 1983], pp. 230-33). Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, who argues that vv. 34f are an interpolation, responds that in a patriarchal society unmarried women do not enjoy greater freedom than married women, that a daughter cannot have a freedom not granted to her mother ("Interpolations in 1 Corinthians," *CBQ* 48 [1986], p. 91). Numerous examples contradict Murphy-O'Connor's statement, whether the celibate Vestal Virgins of ancient Rome or the powerful Christian abbesses of the Middle Ages. In distinction to Schüssler Fiorenza, however, I do not see that the silencing is limited to married women. The injunction is stated absolutely and then followed by a solution for married women desiring to discuss questions of faith. If celibate women have sometimes been granted greater authority than married women in Western history, unmarried women have often been subsumed under married women, since marriage has usually been assumed to be normative, even by those allowing or promoting celibacy.

1 Cor. 14:26-33, 36-40 do read well as a unit, and the summary comments in vv. 37, 39 do not mention women (although perhaps the composition is not so tight as to require a summary of each point). Some scholars do not restrict the interpolation to vv. 34f, but add either v. 33b or v. 36 or both. Such hypotheses demonstrate that the transposition of the verses in some witnesses is only a buttressing argument for the interpolation hypothesis. However, 1 Cor. 14:26-40 also has a discernible structure, as noted above; several groups are addressed with respect to their orderliness in the assembly.

1 Cor. 14:33b-36 does overlap somewhat with 1 Tim. 2:11-15, but the actual verbal similarities are relatively modest ("woman," "man," "subordination/be subordinate," "allow," "learn"). 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 speaks of "speaking" (λαλέω) and of "being silent" (σιγάω), while 1 Tim. 2:11-15 has "to teach" (διδάσκω) and "to have authority over" (αὐθεντέω). Whereas 1 Corinthians appeals to the law as an authority, 1 Timothy appeals to the story of the fall of Adam and Eve (also part of the law, of course). In sum, the verbal similarity is nothing like that between Colossians and Ephesians or between Jude and 2 Peter, works for which we must posit a literary dependence.

Scholars tend to stop the interpretation process at the point of deciding that these verses are an interpolation, e.g.:

> Ephesians, Colossians, and the Pastorals are thus immediately discarded and, for our purposes, hopefully forgotten. Also to be discarded as a post-Pauline gloss is 1 Cor. 14:33*b*-36. . . .[14]

The theological interest in a Paul free of subordinationism is so strong as to require a *Tendenzkritik* of the scholarship which so quickly discards 1 Cor. 14:34f (or an extended form thereof) as an interpolation.[15] Striking in

[14] Robin Scroggs, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman," *JAAR* 40 (1972), p. 284.

[15] Robin Scroggs writes, "Scholars are to blame because they have not rescued Paul from the distortions of this establishment [i.e., the church establishment, which uses deutero-Pauline materials].

It is time, indeed past time, to say loudly and clearly that Paul is, so far from being a chauvinist, the only certain and consistent spokesman for the liberation and equality of women in the New Testament . . ." ("Paul and the Eschatological Woman," p. 283). One is struck again and again at how often scholars cite this article and its companion piece, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman: Revisited," *JAAR* 42 (1974), pp. 532-37, while ignoring the scholarship of women on this and other Pauline texts. Elaine H. Pagels's excellent response to Scroggs, "Paul and Women: A Response to Recent Discussion," *JAAR* 42 (1974), pp. 538-49, is often the only piece by a female scholar to which male scholars refer.

In fairness to Scroggs, we must remember that he wrote those pieces in the early 70's and has not repeated such statements subsequently. My primary point here is to challenge all scholars: 1) to focus on early Christian women, and not just on the New Testament authors

this regard is that Benedikt Niese, editor of Josephus, suspects that the sentences concerning women and the law in *Contra Apionem* 2.24 §201 are an interpolation, citing a closeness to Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; and 1 Pet. 3:1.[16] Scholars need to be cautious of positing interpolations when an ancient author's views differ from their own.[17]

II. Patterns of the Law Evident in Paul

The Holiness Code of Leviticus (Lev. 17-26) is, at first blush, the least likely source of inspiration for Paul. Its concern with priestly rituals, holy things and uncleanness, purification rites, and separation of the people of Israel from the surrounding peoples all seem antithetical to Paul's Gospel, which is based on table fellowship among Jews and gentiles (he even states in a highly un-Levitical fashion, πάντα μὲν καθαρά [Rom. 14:20]) and diametrically opposed to purification rites and to any strict, detailed observance of ritual law. Yet there is in Paul a pattern of speaking about sanctification and impurity that has strong overtones of Leviticus. Consider 1 Thess. 4:3-5, 7:[18]

> For this is the will of God, your sanctification (ὁ ἁγιασμὸς ὑμῶν): that you abstain from unchastity (πορνεία); that each one of you know how to take a wife [literally: "vessel," σκεῦος] for himself in holiness and honor (ἐν ἁγιασμῷ καὶ τιμῇ), not in the passion of lust like heathen who do not know God (μὴ ἐν πάθει ἐπιθμίας καθάπερ καὶ τὰ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ εἰδότα τὸν θεόν). . . . For God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness (ἐπὶ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ ἀλλ' ἐν ἁγιασμῷ).[19]

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who tried to silence them; 2) not to stop the interpretive process at the questions of authenticity and integrity; and 3) to take feminist biblical scholarship into account.

[16] Benedikt Niese, ed., *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, 7 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1887, 1885-95), 5 (1889), p. 83. This view is carried over into H. St. J. Thackeray, Ralph Marcus, and Louis H. Feldman, eds. and tr. *Josephus*, 9 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1926-1965), 1 (1926), p. 372.

[17] See also 1 Cor. 9:8-11, in which Paul appeals to the law allegorically.

[18] Philip Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism: A Study in the Epistles* (Cambridge: University, 1940), esp. pp. 16-21, and Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, 2d ed. (London: Macmillan, 1947), pp. 369-75, propose that Lev. 17-20 is the background of 1 Thess. 4:1-12. They posit the existence of an early Christian neo-Levitical catechism, transformations of which can be found in 1 Thess. 4:1-12 and in 1 Pet.

[19] See O. Larry Yarbrough, *Not Like the Gentiles: Marriage Rules in the Letters of Paul*, SBLDS 80 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1985), pp. 65-87. Yarbrough's discussion of the meaning of σκεῦος is especially convincing and complete (pp. 68-73). He does not devote similar attention to the background of the holiness/impurity complex. On I Thess. 4:3-7 and Rom. 1:23-27, see Michael Newton, *The concept of purity at Qumran and in the letters of Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1985), pp. 102-4.

Compare Lev. 20:23, 26:

> And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation [LXX: "nations," ἔθνη] which I am casting out before you; for they did all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.... You shall be holy (ἅγιοι) to me; for I the LORD am holy (ἅγιος), and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.[20]

To be sure, other aspects of Lev. 20:22-26 represent that which Paul most passionately opposes (e.g., the distinction between clean and unclean beasts, birds and other animals), or which is irrelevant to him (e.g., the possession of the land). Nevertheless, this fundamental scheme of a nation holy to its God, not following the practices of the peoples, is common to both. The terms ἅγιος, ἀκαθαρσία, and ἀκάθαρτος occur more frequently in Leviticus than in any other book of the LXX. Other elements in 1 Thessalonians possibly reminiscent of Lev. 17-26 include: brotherly and sisterly love, φιλαδελφία, and loving one another, τὸ ἀγαπᾶν ἀλλήλους (1 Thess. 4:9; cf. Lev. 19:18); and the image of walking to describe human conduct, περιπατεῖν (1 Thess. 4:1, 12; cf. Lev. 18:3, LXX: τοῖς νομίμοις αὐτῶν οὐ πορεύσεσθε[21]). Both of these are, of course, relatively widespread within Judaism.

Paul also juxtaposes holiness and impurity in Rom. 6:19-23 (on yielding one's members to impurity or to righteousness for holiness) and in 1 Cor. 7:14 (on the children of a believer and a non-believer being impure or holy). Ἀκαθαρσία occurs twice in lists in conjunction with πορνεία and ἀσέλγεια (Gal. 5:19; 2 Cor. 12:21), so that it probably refers to sexual activity.

Rom. 1:24-27 is an especially striking use of ἀκαθαρσία referring to a sexual behavior prohibited by the Levitical Holiness Code, namely same-sex love. The context is Rom. 1:18-32. Paul writes that the wrath of God is revealed against all who suppress the truth (v. 18). Human beings have had the capability to know God through God's created works, but they have not done so and have rather worshiped images (vv. 19-23). Paul goes on to say:

> Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves (Διὸ παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῶν καρδιῶν αὐτῶν εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν τοῦ ἀτιμάζεσθαι τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς), because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and

[20] See also Lev. 19:2.
[21] See esp. Ley. 26 for the image of walking in God's statutes.

served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever! Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions (πάθη ἀτιμίας). Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural (αἵ τε γὰρ θήλειαι αὐτῶν μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν), and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error (ὁμοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην κατεργαζόμενοι καὶ τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ἣν ἔδει τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες).

Lev. 18:22 condemns sexual relations between men as an "abomination" (LXX: βδέλυγμα; MT: תּוֹעֵבָה), and Lev. 20:13 places such relations under the death penalty. Note that Paul says in Rom. 1:32 with reference to same-sex love (vv. 26f) and to the vice-catalogue of vv. 29-31, that "those who do such things deserve to die" (ἄξιοι θανάτου).[22] The Hebrew Bible does not mention sexual relations between women, but post-biblical Jewish writings do. *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, a Greek hortatory poem possibly written by an Alexandrian Jew between 30 B.C.E. and 40 C.E., contains a prohibition of male homosexual behavior and a similar prohibition to women, "And let women not imitate the sexual role [literally, "marriage bed," λέχος ἀνδρῶν] of men" (line 192).[23] *Sifra*, a rabbinical commentary on Leviticus composed of sayings from the tannaitic period (before ca. 220 C.E.), derives a prohibition against women marrying each other from Lev.

[22] I understand Rom. 1:26f to constitute a special lifting up of a vice that would otherwise have been included in the vice-catalogue. The vice-catalogue in Gal. 5:19-21 includes πορνεία, ἀκαθαρσία, and ἀσέλγεια, none of which are in Rom. 1:29-31; the vice-catalogue in 1 Cor. 6:9f includes πόρνοι, μοιχοί, μαλακοί, and ἀρσενοκοῖται, which are again absent in Rom. 1:29-31. The absence of sexual vices in Rom. 1:29-31 is probably due to same-sex love being underscored as the epitome of impurity in Rom. 1:24-27. Since Paul condemns same-sex love as ἀκαθαρσία in Rom. 1:24-27, it is probably included in the ἀκαθαρσία of Gal. 5:19. The vice-catalogues of Gal. 5:19-21 and of 1 Cor. 6:9f both include the warning that those practicing these vices will not inherit the kingdom of God. This is a clue to the meaning of "deserve to die" in Rom. 1:32. Rather than speaking of an earthly death penalty for the preceding vices, Paul may mean death in the eschaton. The temporal meaning, however, is not thereby excluded.

[23] P(ieter) W. van der Horst, tr., in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983-85), 2 (1985), p. 581; on date and provenance, see pp. 567f; for the Greek text and commentary, see P(ieter) W. van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), pp. 239f.

18:3; Israelites are not to walk in the statutes of the Egyptians and the Canaanites, who apparently allow women to marry each other.[24] A conflict between the schools of Hillel and Shammai (1st C. C.E.) is recorded in the Jerusalem Talmud (compiled and edited ca. 5th C. C.E.) as to whether women who have intercourse with each other become unfit to marry into the priesthood and to eat the priestly offerings (see Lev. 21:7, 13).[25] The Babylonian Talmud and later Jewish sources also take up the question of sexual relations between women.[26] Paul's condemnation of sexual relations between men and between women thus coincides with Lev. 18:22; 20:13 and with post-biblical Jewish condemnation of such relations between women. He may be said to be in line with developing Jewish legal thinking.

Perhaps one might protest that there is nothing particularly Levitical about Paul's condemnation of same-sex love in Rom. 1:24-27, that Paul simply has a general concern for morality, one which coincides not only with Jewish ethical teaching, but also with the more responsible strands of Graeco-Roman ethics. To be sure, Paul does not directly quote Leviticus here, and while he uses the term "impurity," ἀκαθαρσία, Lev. 18:22; 20:13 have "abomination," βδέλυγμα (תּוֹעֵבָה). Moreover, Septuagintal backgrounds other than Leviticus, especially Wisdom of Solomon 14, in which the author describes idol worship as the source of immorality, of marriages and lives not kept pure, and of sexual disorder generally (see especially 14:12, 24-26), certainly inspired Paul when he wrote Rom. 1:18-32. Further, his condemnation of same-sex love is shared by many of his contemporaries, both Jewish and pagan. For example, Greek and Latin astrological sources ranging from the Hellenistic through the early Byzantine periods frequently mention women attracted to women and men attracted to men.[27] To be born such a person is, in the eyes of these astrologers, a misfortune resulting from the constellation under which one was born. Astrological texts occasionally use ἀκαθαρσία in connection with a same-sex orientation, which they see to be a life-long condition.[28] The women, called τριβάδες, are

[24] I. H. Weiss, ed., *Sifra* (Vienna: Schlossberg, 1862), on Lev. 18:3 (Aḥarei Mot, Parasha 9).

[25] *Y. Giṭ.*, 49c. 60-61.

[26] *B. Šabb.* 65a-b; *b. Yebam.* 76a (see Rashi on both passages); Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, *'Issurei Bi'ah* 21:8; Joseph Karo, *Shulḥan Arukh*, *'Eben ha'Ezer* 20.2.

[27] The book which I am currently writing on early Christian responses to female homoeroticism and their historical context includes a section on ancient astrology. The sources include: The Book of Hermes Trismegistos, Dorotheos of Sidon, Claudius Ptolemy, Vettius Valens, Firmicus Maternus, Hephaistion of Thebes, and Manetho.

[28] See, e.g., Vettius Valens, *Anthologiai* 1.1 §13; 2.17 §66 (2d C. C.E.); Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 3.13 §160; see also 4.5 §187f (on the ideal heterosexual behavior, which for men is to be καθάριοι καὶ σεμνοί, and for women is to be σώφρονες καὶ καθάριοι [2d C. C.E.]).

described as being like men, while soft and passive men (κίναιδοι, μαλακοί, *molles mares, pathici*, etc.) are described as being like women. These astrological texts draw upon general cultural constructs about gender, constructs possibly shared by Paul. James Charlesworth has documented an interest in astrology on the part of Jews in this period,[29] so that Paul may even have had direct knowledge of popular astrology. In other words, when I speak of a Levitical background to Rom. 1:24-27, I am not arguing that it is the only background. Nevertheless, Leviticus must have comprised part of the knowledge imparted to Paul during his training as a Pharisee.

The ancient author closest in terminology and conceptualization to Paul in his condemnation of same-sex love is Philo of Alexandria.[30] Both Paul and Philo reject sexual relations between men; both use the term "unnatural" or "contrary to nature," παρὰ φύσιν; both imagine physical recompense for male homosexual behavior; both emphasize that the participants are worthy of death;[31] and both reject men wearing hair styles also worn by women (see 1 Cor. 11:2-16). Philo, who explicitly defines the behavior as pederasty, emphasizes in the strongest of terms that both the passive and the active partner, i.e., the child and the adult, are deserving of death. Philo presupposes that sexual intercourse implies an active and a passive partner, normally a man and a woman. Like some others in the Roman world who condemn love between men, Philo sees passive male homosexuals as having become like women, i.e., as having lowered themselves to the social level of a woman. For Philo the gendered order of society is at stake. In homosexual relations the boundaries between male and female become blurred. Males leave their superordinate position to become subordinate, thus confounding the order of things.

A similar concern may be motivating Paul. The most common motif in the condemnation of female homoeroticism in the Roman world is that the woman has become masculine, which in cultural terms means that she has tried to go beyond the passive role accorded to her by nature and rise to the social level of a man. I have argued elsewhere that ἀκαθαρσία in Rom. 1:24 probably means such a blurring of gender boundaries, a confounding of the

[29] See James H. Charlesworth, "Jewish Interest in Astrology during the Hellenistic and Roman Period," *ANRW* 20/2 (1987): 926-50; Plates I-VI. The evidence cited by Charlesworth includes: 4QCryptic; Treatise of Shem; *b. Šabb.* 156a-156b; and the signs of the zodiac found in synagogue mosaics in Beth Alpha, Ḥammat-Tiberias, Naʿaran, and elsewhere. Charlesworth also refers to evidence for astrology's popularity among early Christians.

[30] *De spec. leg.* 3.37-39; *De Abr.* 133-41; *De vita contempl.* 59-63.

[31] *De spec. leg.* 3.38 (φονᾶν ἄξιος); Rom. 1:32 (ἄξιοι θανάτου).

order of the world as laid down by God in creation.[32] The ancient sources condemning same-sex love are very concerned with maintaining gender boundaries and the subordination of women and superordination of men.[33]

In 1 Cor. 5:1-5, Paul directs the congregation to deliver to Satan a man who is in a sexual relationship with the wife of his father (γυνὴ πατρός); the man is to be removed from the midst of the congregation (ἀρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν). Lev. 18:8 reads, "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife [LXX: γυνὴ πατρός); it is your father's nakedness." Lev. 20:11 describes the penalty, "The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall be put to death, their blood is upon them."[34] Lev. 18:8; 20:11 are the most logical biblical background to 1 Cor. 5:1-5. Interpreters have never been particularly surprised to find Paul in conjunction with Leviticus in the cases of forbidden sexual relations between two men and between a man and his father's wife, probably because such relations are generally perceived as pertaining to moral, rather than ritual, law. The category, "moral," implies that a law has enduring validity for all societies, rather than being based upon the peculiar cultic practices of one society. In contrast, I hold that the prohibitions of certain sexual relations in Lev. 18, 20 cannot be classified as moral, rather than ritual. Rather, we need to search for an alternative model in order to explain certain features of these laws.

The underlying assumption of this legislation seems to be that the prohibited behavior has a defiling effect on all participants, regardless of age, and regardless of whether one partner forced the other into the act; for this reason, in most instances, all partners are to suffer the death penalty in order that the Israelite people may remain holy to its God. Lev. 18:8; 20:11 occur in the larger context of incest prohibitions (Lev. 18:6-18; 20:11-21). Note that this is also the context of the prohibition of sexual relations between

[32] See Bernadette J. Brooten, "Paul's Views on the Nature of Women and Female Homoeroticism," in Clarissa W. Atkinson, Constance H. Buchanan, and Margaret R. Miles, eds., *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality* (Boston: Beacon, 1985), pp. 61-87.

[33] In Gal. 3:28 Paul recognizes a fundamental oneness of women and men in Christ. The omission of the "male and female" portion of the pre-Pauline baptismal formula in 1 Cor. 12:13 raises the question whether for Paul that meant political and social equality. Paul omits the "male and female" in his letter to the Corinthian community, in which gender is a hotly debated issue, whereas he includes it when writing to the Galatians, for whom questions concerning gender and social order do not seem to be acute. Could he be avoiding drawing the egalitarian consequences which some of the Corinthian women seem to be drawing? Similarly, Paul's recognition of a oneness between slave and free does not translate into a call for societal equality; thus, he sends Onesimus back to his master, Philemon.

[34] Roman law prohibits a marriage between a man and his step-mother, which Paul may also have known.

men. The system of sexual conduct operative here, which is based on the concepts of purity, impurity and abomination, prescribes the punishment of all participants in sexual acts, regardless of whether they were forced to participate or even had the capability to consent. Thus, Lev. 20:13 does not distinguish among intercourse between consenting adult males; between an adult and a minor; and between one adult and another non-consenting adult. The victim of homosexual rape and the child victim of pederasty are to be executed along with the perpetrators. Similarly, the penalties for incest, which include death, are to be meted out not only to consenting adults, but also to the child victims and to the adult perpetrators. Age and consent do not occur as relevant categories in this material. Further, father-daughter incest constitutes a striking omission to this legislation. Mother-daughter and father-son incest are also excluded, since the prohibition is articulated in the second person masculine singular and the object is always a female. Father-daughter incest could possibly be included under the prohibition against taking "a wife and her mother also" (Lev. 20:14; see Lev. 18:17), for which the punishment is the burning of all three.[35] Thus, if a father raped his minor daughter, the perpetrator, the victim and the non-perpetrator mother would all be burned. Father-son incest could, of course, be categorized as relations between two males, in which case the adult perpetrator and the victim, his son, would both have to be executed (Lev. 20:13).

The concept behind this system seems to be that the forbidden sexual act defiles all participants, and that the sanctity of the community requires that the community be cleansed of their presence. Leviticus requires the death penalty for certain prohibited sexual behaviors which are perceived to defile the participants and thereby the community as a whole; Paul calls upon the congregation to remove from its midst a man practicing a behavior prohibited by Leviticus, and he orders the man's deliverance over to Satan (1 Cor. 5:2, 5).[36] Paul does not mention the father's wife; she is possibly not a member of the Christian congregation. Note that Paul's judgment is not framed in moral categories, such as coercion or consent. Paul may have known the precise circumstances. We do not. For example, the father's wife could have

[35] Judith Romney Wegner notes that the omission of father-daughter incest from Lev. 18, 20 also occurs in the Mishnah's lists of incestuous relationships in *m. Ker.* 1:1; *m. Sanh.* 7:4; and *m. Mak.* 3:1. She points out that consanguineity is not the primary issue, but rather whether the women prohibited to a particular man are *"the sexual property of other men"* (*Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah* [New York: Oxford, 1988], pp. 27f [emphasis Wegner's]). She does note that by mishnaic times father-daughter incest was prohibited under reference to Lev. 18:17 (*m. Sanh.* 9:1).

[36] In 1 Cor. 5:6-8 the image of the community requiring cleansing is carried further into the image of the leaven and the lump of dough, which is a ritual image drawn from Passover practices.

initiated intercourse with her step-son while he was still a minor, making her a perpetrator and him a victim. The present relationship could, therefore, continue the man's earlier victimization. In sum, great care and further research are required to ascertain the ancient organizing principles of prohibited sexual behaviors.[37] The Levitical legislation on incest and homosexual relations, as well as Rom. 1:24-27 or 1 Cor. 5:1-5, both of which have clear precedents in Leviticus, are not elucidated by the distinction between ritual and moral.

1 Cor. 11:2-16, on the veiling or hairstyle of women and of men, is only indirectly relevant to the present discussion. The Pentateuch does not contain a direct commandment on headdress and hairstyle. Deut. 22:5, the statement that it is an abomination for a woman to wear what pertains to a man or for a man to put on a woman's garment, may be in the background of 1 Cor. 11:2-16. In post-biblical Judaism, veiling and hairstyle become matters of legal relevance. For example, *m. Ket.* 7:6 defines it as contrary to Jewish custom (but not as contrary to the Law of Moses) for a wife to go out with her hair unbound; she who does so does not receive her *ketubah* upon divorce.[38]

[37] Source-critical and tradition-historical studies of Lev. 18, 20 have often proceeded from anachronistic assumptions which have hindered progress in uncovering the ancient organizing principles. For example, Karl Elliger assumes that father-daughter incest must have originally been prohibited in a statement just preceding 18:10 and was accidentally deleted through a transmission error ("your sister, the *daughter* of your father . . ." occurs in v. 9; a scribe could have deleted an adjacent verse concerning the daughter through homoeoarcton); he further argues that a series of eleven elements, as in Lev. 18:7-17a, does not conform to the standard form for a series of apodictic laws, which often occur in sets of twelve. "Denn es ist schwerlich zu bestreiten, daß vor v. 10 das entsprechende Verbot über die Tochter ausgefallen ist, natürlich infolge Homoiarkton. ... Daß sich ungesucht die bei solchen Reihen apodiktischer Rechtssätze beliebte Standardzahl 12 ergibt, darf als weiteres Zeichen für die Einheit und einstmalige Selbständigkeit der vv. 7-17a gebucht werden" ("Das Gesetz Leviticus 18," *ZAW* 67 [1955], p. 2; see also *Leviticus*, Handbuch zum Alten Testament 1/4, [Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1966], pp. 234, 238). The thesis of accidental omission is not convincing. If father-daughter incest were central to the legislation, then why would a later redactor (of a text assumed by Elliger and other scholars to have passed through multiple stages of redaction) not have noticed the omission and reinserted it? Elliger's second argument, concerning the standard sets of twelve apodictic laws, would be easier to evaluate if he had presented a thorough argument, complete with an overview of the parallels. His assumption that father-daughter incest must have been present in the text prevents an analysis of why, in fact, it is not. See also Henry T. C. Sun, "An Investigation into the Compositional Integrity of the So-Called Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26)" (Ph.D. diss., The Claremont Graduate School, 1990), who argues that the absence of father-daughter incest is intentional, rather than accidental, and is based on the rights of a father over his daughter (pp. 134-163). Sun hypothesizes: "It would be the loss of potential income that would keep father-daughter incest from occurring. This is why one does not have legislation concerned with one's personal use of one's personal property" (p. 151). Sun also questions the existence of a Holiness Code as a discreet unit.

[38] See further Louis M. Epstein, *Sex Laws and Customs in Judaism* (New York: Bloch, 1948), pp. 36-52.

2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 requires at least brief mention. Of any passage in the Pauline corpus, it is the most replete with the language of separation, holiness, impurity and defilement. I agree with those scholars who categorize it as an interpolation, but I want to raise the question of how it became attached to 2 Corinthians. Some early Christians were able to convince congregations and later scribes that Paul could have preached a theology of holiness versus defilement, of separation from uncleanness, and of the lack of fellowship between light and darkness. Could the patterns of the law I outline here have helped the interpolation (1 Cor. 6:14-7:1) be accepted as genuine? I propose as a methodological principle that scholars discussing possible interpolations and pseudepigraphic writings need to raise such larger historical questions, and not stop with the questions of authenticity.[39]

III. Conclusions

I have observed that Paul's departure from the Jewish law was not complete in practical matters. The ongoing validity of the decalogue and the love commandment of Lev. 19:18 remains unquestioned. The direct appeal to the law in 1 Cor. 14:34 may have been written by Paul himself. An exegetical problem in 1 Cor. 14:34 is that the Pentateuch does not explicitly command a women to be subordinate, although Gen. 3:16 does state that the husband will rule over the wife, and a situation of subordination is created by a number of the Pentateuchal laws. A command to women to be silent in the assembly is not, however, one of these. Further, indirect patterns of the law are to be found in Paul. He uses terminology and concepts which also occur in the Holiness Code, and prohibits behaviors prohibited in the Holiness Code, namely sexual relations between men and between a man and his father's wife. Paul also condemns sexual relations between women as "impurity," a condemnation which is in line with several post-biblical Jewish writings. I have argued that defining as moral, rather than as ritual, those patterns of the law taken over by Paul, does not allow us to identify the ancient organizing principles inherent in Leviticus which form the backdrop of the Pauline passages in question.

In the matter of idolatry, Paul is firm in his opposition to the veneration of images and statues, but quite pragmatic concerning meat offered to other deities. He is quite willing to break with Jewish law on dietary laws and

[39] 1 Cor. 7:10f (prohibition of divorce) could be seen as going against the law, which allows divorce. Deut. 24:1-4 does not, however, command divorce, but simply presupposes its existence. The example of Qumran shows that at least some Jewish legal specialists could see prohibiting divorce as consonant with the law (*Temple Scroll* 57.17-19; *Damascus Document* 4:20f).

circumcision. These conscious choices demonstrate that Paul is willing to break with the law over questions of religious identity. In such questions as same-sex love and possibly the silencing of women, he chooses not to break with what he perceives to be the law. Circumcision is a dual issue, of course, one of religious and of sexual identity, but Paul discusses circumcision solely as a question of religious identity. I suggest that in the cases of marriage (1 Thess. 4:3-7) and same-sex love (Rom. 1:24-27), "impurity" may primarily designate social disorder with respect to gender roles. Further, Paul's assertion that certain deeds will preclude one from inheriting the kingdom of God and his injunction to hand a Christian over to Satan because of his behavior seem to contradict his teaching of justification by faith and not works.

I have not suggested that Paul does not genuinely perceive Christ to be the end of the law. For Paul, Christ has taken the place of the Torah. However, making Christ the starting point does not solve the complex questions of societal order, community order, and ethics. Paul draws upon the Jewish law selectively for guidance in such questions. He differs from Jews for whom the Torah is central in this pronounced selectivity and in that he is not speaking as a member of a community of legal discourse. This study demonstrates that scholars need to investigate more precisely Paul's understanding of the Jewish law in comparison with the various schools of Jewish legal thinking.

Paul Among the Rabbis and the Fathers: Exegetical Reflections

by David Satran

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My charge from the planning committee of the Symposium was to explore the manner in which Romans chs. 9-11 was "taken up by individuals and communities in the early Common Era." More specifically, they asked: "How did Christian and Jewish readers of this text understand it and the question of the relation of [the] Church and Israel, and what outcomes did that understanding have for their ways of thinking and acting?" The more I reflected on this question the more perplexing, challenging, and intriguing it became.

I. The Veil of Rabbinic Silence

That Christians of the early centuries read, commented upon, and preached Paul's letter to the Romans is no surprise. A long line of Church Fathers have left their reflections on the epistle and our own generation has seen a series of learned and sophisticated studies of their interpretation.[1] The relationship between text and exegete has been formative in both directions. On the one hand, all subsequent readings of Paul—whether those of the Eastern Churches, the European Reformation, or modern New Testament scholarship—bear the marks of the understandings and misunderstandings of the early Fathers.[2] On the other hand, much of what these leaders of the

[1] M. F. Wiles, *The Divine Apostle. The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles in the Early Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) remains a masterly overview; A. Souter, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927) contains valuable studies of Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Jerome, Augustine, and Pelagius. There are two major investigations of early Christian exegesis of Romans: K. H. Schelkle, *Paulus Lehrer der Väter. Die altkirchliche Auslegung von Römer 1-11* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1956) and P. Gorday, *Principles of Patristic Exegesis. Romans 9-11 in Origen, John Chrysostom, and Augustine* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1983); the latter provides both a survey and extensive bibliography of previous research. K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche* [Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 15] (Münster: Achendorff, 1933, 1984²) assembles the fragmentary exegesis.

[2] For a sharp indictment of the influence of Augustine and the Reformation on modern attitudes, see K. Stendahl, "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West," *HTR* 56 (1963): 199-215 (=*Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976]: 78-96). So too, Gorday, *Principles of Patristic Exegesis* is in many respects an undisguised appeal to what he sees as the neglected "Origenian" exegesis of Romans 9-11 in contrast to a regnant Augustinian orientation.

early church achieved theologically and doctrinally could not have been imagined were it not for the apostle's literary and spiritual presence. It matters little whether the positions adopted by later generations accord with those of Paul or not; the major questions which stand at the crossroads and the very language in which they are discussed are unmistakably his. In a very real sense, if one may paraphrase, the history of Christian thought is no more than a series of footnotes to Paul—and no small part of them to the text of Romans.

It is quite a different matter, however, to suggest that Paul's letter to the Romans—or any other work from his pen, for that matter—can be demonstrated to have found a Jewish audience. (My intention, of course, is to an unequivocally "normative" Jewish audience; Jewish-Christians of various persuasions clearly knew of Paul and his opinions and despised them both.[3]) While Jesus is unmistakably present in the writings of the Rabbis from the early centuries, there would not appear to be a single clear reference to the figure of Paul. As Travers Herford remarked: "It would certainly be strange if the man who . . . was the foe of the traditional Judaism, and who, moreover, had been in his youth a strict Pharisee, would be passed over in silence by the defenders of that Judaism when they had occasion to refer to Christianity."[4] While we may no longer share this view of Paul and his relationship to Rabbinic Judaism, it remains no less remarkable that the vast literature of the Talmudim and Midrashim, both the spheres of halakhah and aggadah, make no unequivocal reference to his activities and his teachings.

This thundering silence regarding Paul in Jewish sources should not be interpreted too hastily as simple ignorance of his existence or influence. Rather, it must be understood within the larger context of rabbinic reactions, or lack of the same, to the rise of Christianity. When measured against

[3] The clearest example is offered by the pseudo-Clementine literature; see E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (eds.), *New Testament Apocrypha* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967) II, p. 71; for further detail: G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen* [TUGAL 70] (Berlin, 1958) pp. 187-196. On the earliest stages of this conflict, see J. Louis Martyn, "Paul and his Jewish-Christian Interpreters," *USQR* 42 (1988): 1-15.

[4] R. T. Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1903) p. 100. The suggested references to Paul in H. Hirschberg, "Allusions to the Apostle Paul in the Talmud," *JBL* 62 (1943): 73-87 are singularly far-fetched. Herford himself (pp. 70-71, 97-103) suggested strongly that there is an isolated reference to Paul in b. *Sotah* 47a (cf. b. *Sanhedrin* 107b) under the guise of Gehazi, the servant of the prophet Elisha. Some cautions in this regard have been raised by E. E. Urbach, "Homilies of the Rabbis on the Prophets of the Nations and the Balaam Stories," *Tarbiz* 25 (1955-56): 272-289 [Hebrew], esp. pp. 281-284. For possible allusions to Paul as arch-apostate, see W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964) pp. 285-286, n.3.

the massive interest which patristic sources reveal in both Jews and Judaism, the Rabbis of the Talmudic period would seem scarcely to have reacted to the phenomenon of the early Church.[5] Yet such apparent lack of concern is scarcely plausible or even possible. Indeed, one of the most tantalizing aspects of recent scholarship on the religious history of late antiquity is the mounting recognition of the close contact in which Jewish and Christian communities lived throughout the Mediterranean basin.[6] How does one account, then, for the disproportionately minor notice which Christianity achieves in Jewish sources from that period? In fact, it has long been recognized by students of Rabbinic literature that one form of polemic response may be silence, i.e., a purposeful lack of response.[7] This form of silent polemic has been demonstrated, for example, to be the major factor behind the virtual absence of early Jewish exegesis of Isaiah 52:13-53:12, the famous song of the "suffering servant": "Jewish leadership in the early Christian centuries seems to have resorted to a modicum of self-censorship, convinced that the public airing of this vexed chapter was not in the interests of its own community, into whose teeth the Church was unerringly casting it."[8] There is, then, a very real sense in which rabbinic knowledge of early Christianity cannot adequately be induced from the explicit statements to be culled from their writings.

[5] The fundamental study of the relationship between Jews and Christians during this period is M. Simon, *Verus Israel* (Paris: 1948, 1964, 2nd ed.; English translation, Oxford, 1986). S. Krauss, "The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers," *JQR* 5 (1892-1893) 122-157; 6 (1893-94) 82-99, 225-261 remains a useful survey. Encyclopedic is H. Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (1.-11.Jh.)*. [Europäische Hochschulschriften XXII.172] (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1982). The standard survey of rabbinic literature on this score is still Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*; for a recent attempt in this area, and its shortcomings, see D. Goldenberg, "Once More: Jesus in the Talmud," *JQR* 73 (1982) 78-86. A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* [SJLA 25] (Leiden: Brill, 1977) takes up an important aspect of the problem.

[6] For the sake of brevity, I note only the following studies, L. I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule* (Leiden: Brill, 1975); N.R.M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); R. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1983); J. G. Gager, *The Origins of Antisemitism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). This appreciation depends greatly upon a correct understanding of the "Birkhat-ha-Minim" and its limited effect: see R. Kimmelman, "*Birkat Ha-Minim* and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity," in E. P. Sanders, et al. (eds.), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition. II. Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981) pp. 226-244, 391-403 and T.C.G. Thornton, "Christian Understandings of the *Birkath Ha-Minim* in the Eastern Roman Empire," *JThS* 38 (1987): 419-431.

[7] See the related observations concerning polemic against idolatry in S. Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1962) pp. 126-127.

[8] R. Loewe, "Prolegomenon" to the reprint of *The Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah According to the Jewish Interpreters* (1977; New York: Ktav, 1969) II, p. 22. His demonstration of purposeful silence is based upon the otherwise inexplicable exclusion of the chapter from the Sabbath lectionary cycle.

I would like to suggest that the case of Paul, so seemingly hopeless and intractable, may offer an opportunity to penetrate behind the veil of rabbinic silence. The key to this suggestion lies in a basic characteristic shared by Paul and the Rabbis: a disposition, perhaps better, an inherent need, to talk about the relationship between God and his people within an interpretative context. This attitude has been captured by Prof. Beker when he so aptly describes Paul as "a hermeneutic theologian rather than a systematic theologian."[9] We are moving closer, I suspect, to a full recognition of the extent to which Paul's thought is a product, complex and not always internally consistent, of his exegetical stance.[10] These observations regarding Paul might serve as an equally fitting characterization of the Rabbis of the early centuries. Their theology, if indeed that be the proper term, is coherent yet in no way systematic; its foundation lies in the attempt to wrest meaning from the Bible.[11] It should be possible to exploit this common ground, this joint propensity for hermeneutic thinking, through a comparative exercise in the history of exegesis: an investigation of rabbinic reactions to the scriptural sources of Paul's thought.

The two passages from Romans 9-11 which I shall discuss comprise vivid images and bold ideas which have given birth to rich interpretation. In both instances Paul's text can be seen to reflect passages from the Hebrew Bible, most significantly from the book of Jeremiah. The Rabbinic "reactions" to Paul are, in fact, their own reflections on the verses from Jeremiah which may have arisen in partial response to contemporary Christian exegesis. It is crucial to emphasize the dangers and poverty of examining either Christian or Jewish biblical interpretation in a vacuum. The idea of Rabbinic interaction with the epistle to the Romans lacks all historical reality unless it be within the context of the early Church's understanding of Paul.

Two brief remarks may be in order. I have attempted in the following pages to refrain from the assessment of a particular interpretation as being

[9] J. C. Beker, "The Faithfulness of God and the Priority of Israel in Paul's Letter to the Romans," in G.W.E. Nickelsburg and G. W. MacRae (eds.), *Christians Among Jews and Gentiles* [K. Stendahl Festschrift] (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) p. 10.

[10] There is voluminous literature on Paul's interpretation of Scripture; two new studies are fundamental: R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale, 1989) and D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums. Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1986). Of especial interest are N. A. Dahl, "Contradictions in Scripture" in *Studies in Paul* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977) pp. 159-177 and J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle. The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984, 2nd ed.) pp. 109-131 ("Tradition and Gospel").

[11] Fundamental are: S. Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (1909; New York: Schocken, 1961); M. Kadushin, *Organic Thinking: A Study in Rabbinic Thought* (New York, 1938); I. Heinemann, *Methodology of the Aggadah* [= *Darkhei Ha-Aggadah*] (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1950).

either true or false to Paul's own intention, but rather to set out the plain sense of that interpretation. As Maurice Wiles observed: "Whoever is confident that he know the true exegesis of St. Paul's thought will then be in a position to answer for himself the question how far the interpretation given by the Fathers is correct."[12] Finally, my comments may devote somewhat more attention to Rabbinic "readings" of Paul than to patristic interpretation; I have simply been drawn by the path less taken.

II. "As Clay in the Hand of the Potter" (Rom. 9:20-21)

In his opening exposition (9:6-29) of "God's free election and sovereign faithfulness"[13] Paul discusses the difficult examples of the rejection of Esau and the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The assertion of the unconditional autonomy of God's will (9:18) leads to the rhetorical counter-question:

> You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will." (9:19)

Paul's answer is uncompromising and framed in terms of familiar prophetic imagery for the relationship between God and his creation:

> (20) But who are you, a man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me thus?"
> (21) Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?

The figure of the potter and his clay is widespread both in biblical and post-biblical Jewish literature, and it is difficult to determine Paul's precise sources.[14] The book of Isaiah (29:16; 45:9) employs the image in order to accent the utter remove between the Creator and his creation. In the Wisdom of Solomon (15:7-13) the figure appears as part of a standard polemic against idolatry.[15] Closest perhaps to Paul's own understanding is the discussion in the Book of Ben Sira (33:7-15) of the natural diversity ordained by God:

[12] Wiles, *The Divine Apostle*, p. 2.

[13] M. Barth, *The People of God*, [JSNT Supp. Series 5] (Sheffield, 1983) p. 34.

[14] The commentaries and handbooks vary on this point. For an attempt to assess the lexical relationships between the texts, see H. Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel. Zum Schriftgebrauch des Paulus in Römer 9-11* [FRLANT 136] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984) pp. 46-49, 152. I have not been able to consult E. H. Plumptre, "The Plotter and the Clay," *The Expositor* 4 (1876): 409-480.

[15] See the references in D. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* [Anchor Bible 43] (Garden City: Doubleday, 1979) pp. 285-286. Note too the proximity between Rom. 9:19-20 and Wisdom 12:12. For a strong statement of Paul's knowledge of that book, see the remarks of S. Holmes in R. H. Charles (ed.), *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913) I, pp. 526-527.

As clay in the hand of the potter—
for all his ways are as he pleases—
so men are in the hand of him who made them,
to give them as he decides. (33:13)[16]

Paul's forceful use of the image of clay in the potter's hands was of clear and prolonged consequence in the history of Christian thought, serving as a focus for much crucial discussion of the problems of predestination and free-will.[17] The centrality of the passage emerges already in the writings of the two great theologians of the early Church: Origen and Augustine. Both in his early treatise *On First Principles* and his later *Commentary on Romans*, Origen wrestles with these verses repeatedly in an attempt to secure human freedom.[18] Augustine, too, makes recurrent use of the image as he moves inexorably towards a position of grace and election.[19] What slowly has disappeared from view in the course of these later theological discussions is Paul's own interpretative context—the nature of God's relationship with Jew and Gentile.

The figure of clay in the hand of the potter was no less familiar to the Rabbis who seemed to have favored two particular biblical texts (Isa. 64:7; Jer. 18:6) in their own exegesis. An early interpretation of the verse from Jeremiah appears in a tradition from the Babylonian Talmud (*Sukkah* 52b) attributed to a famous Rabbi of third-century Palestine:

Rabbi Yochanan said: Were it not for the following three passages from Scripture, [the enemies of] Israel would not have a leg to stand on:
first, as it is written: "[In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away,] and those whom

[16] According to the Septuagint, as the Hebrew is more than slightly vexed; see M. Z. Segal, *Sefer Ben-Sira HaShalem* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1972) pp. 206 (text), 211 (notes).

[17] First explored in V. Weber, *Kritische Geschichte der Exegese des 9. Kapitels, resp. der Verse 14-23, des Römerbriefs bis auf Chrysostomus und Augustinus einschliesslich* (Würzburg, 1889); see Gorday, *Principles of Patristic Exegesis*, pp. 26-28. See now K. H. Schelkle, "Erwählung und Freiheit im Römerbrief nach der Auslegung der Väter," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 131 (1951): 17-31, 189-207 (= *Wort und Schrift* [Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1966] pp. 251-272). For the predestinarian background of Romans 9, see D. Flusser, "The Dead Sea Sect and Pre-Pauline Christianity," *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls* [Scripta Hierosolymitana 4] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1965) pp. 220-222.

[18] The *locus classicus* is the *De Principiis* Bk. III, ch. 1. For the background, see E. H. Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul. Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) esp. pp. 37-39. W.J.P. Boyd, "Origen on Pharoah's Hardened Heart. A Study of Justification and Election in St. Paul and Origen," *Studia Patristica* 7.1 [TUGAL 92] (Berlin: Akademie, 1966) pp. 434-442 is often insightful.

[19] See Gorday, *Principles of Patristic Exegesis*, pp. 167-170, 182-187; P. Frederiksen Landes (ed.-tr.), *Augustine on Romans* [SBLTT 23] (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982) pp. x-xii.

I have afflicted" (Micah 4:6); second, as it is written: "Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel" (Jer. 18:6); finally, as it is written: "And I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26).[20]

The passage is admittedly somewhat taciturn, even opaque. What does it mean that Israel—the phrase "enemies of Israel" is a common euphemism in Rabbinic texts—would not have a leg to stand on (literally: their legs would collapse)? What support is derived from the three citations from the prophets? Answers may be sought in a later, anonymous midrash which would appear to use the earlier tradition, enhance it considerably, and in the process clarify its principal intent:

What is the meaning of "We are the clay, and thou art our potter" (Isa. 64:7)?
Israel said: "Lord of the Universe, you caused it to be written for us thus: 'Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.' (Jer. 18:6). For this reason, though we sin and provoke you, do not depart from us, for 'We are the clay and thou art our potter.' "
Come and observe: if the potter makes a jar and leaves inside a pebble, then when it comes out of the furnace it will leak from the hole left by the pebble and lose any liquid poured into it. Who caused the jar to leak and to lose its contents?—the potter who left the pebble inside!
Thus Israel spoke before the Holy One, blessed be He: "Lord of the Universe, you have created within us an Evil Inclination from our youth, as it says 'for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth' (Gen. 8:21). It is this which causes (us) to sin before you, and you have not removed from us the agent of sin! But we implore you—remove it from us in order that we may do your will."
He said to them: "Thus will I do in the Time to Come," as it says, "In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away, and those whom I have afflicted" (Micah 4:6).
What is the meaning of "those whom I have afflicted"?—this is the

[20] See the parallel in b. *Berakhot* 32a, where the tradition is attributed to Rabbi Hama, son of R. Hanina. There is an interesting analysis of the latter passage in M. Greenberg, " 'You Have Turned Their Hearts Backward' (1 Kings 18:37)," in J. J. Petuchowski and E. Fleischer (eds.), *Studies in Aggadah, Targum and Jewish Liturgy in Memory of Joseph Heinemann* (Jerusalem: Magnes-HUC, 1981) p. 54 [Hebrew].

Evil Inclination, as it says, "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."[21]

The argument of this passage, very much as one comes to expect from rabbinic midrash, is rooted in a series of close verbal connections. God, as potter (*yotser*), is directly responsible for the inclination (*yetser*) towards evil which is immanent in his creatures. God's admission of his responsibility for this evil (*ra'*) is proven by his promise to gather in, at the end of time, those whom he has afflicted (*hare'othi*), i.e. caused to do evil. The Evil Inclination (*yetser hara'*) remains a central, if elusive, concept in rabbinic thought.[22] This idea, however, clearly underlies the earlier rabbinic tradition transmitted in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: the three biblical passages cited there—two of which feature prominently in the later midrash—are perceived as legal support for Israel when she is charged with misconduct. They offer firm proof that human responsibility is mitigated by divine authority. Or, as Paul framed the query: "Why does He still find fault? For who can resist his will" (9:19).

The harshness of Paul's rebuke—"But who are you, a man to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, 'Why have you made me thus?' " (9:20)—relies on the nature of the image itself, the remove between Creator and creature. The anonymous author of the later midrash is not only at ease with the biblical imagery—as so many commentators on Paul are not—but is eager to explore the analogy. Indeed, he expands the figure of the potter and his vessel into a parable precisely in order that God may be held accountable. The prooftext which provides the point of departure for his exegesis, Isaiah 64:7, stresses the intimate nature of that imagery:

> "Yet, O Lord, thou art our Father;
> we are the clay, and thou art our potter;
> we are all the work of thy hand."

The argument of the midrash rests in no small part, then, on a proper understanding of that relationship, which Paul knew as "sonship" (9:4)—"though we sin and provoke you, do not depart from us, for 'We are the clay and thou art our potter.' "

[21] *Exodus Rabbah* 46:4. See the discussion of this passage in E. E. Urbach, *The Sages—Their Concepts and Beliefs*, tr. I. Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1979, 2nd ed.) I, p. 480.

[22] Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, pp. 242-263; G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (1927; New York: Schocken, 1971) I, pp. 474-496; Urbach, *The Sages*, pp. 471-483. See the very interesting observations in J. Marcus, "The Evil Inclination in the Letters of Paul," *Irish Biblical Studies* 8 (1986): 8-21.

Contrast this boldness of speech with John Chrysostom's interpretation of Romans 9:20a ("But who are you, a man, to answer back to God?"):

> This he does to take down the objector's unseasonable inquisitiveness and excessive curiosity, and to put a check upon it, and to teach him to know what God is, and what man, and how incomprehensible His foreknowledge is, and how far above our reason, and how obedience to him in all points is binding. ... See how he scares them, how he terrifies them, how he makes them tremble rather than be questioning and curious.[23]

Interestingly, both Origen and Augustine resisted this conclusion, arguing that Paul's rebuke was not intended for all. Origen observes that "he who has confidence towards God by reason of his faith and good life would not hear the words, 'who are you, a man, to answer back to God?' "[24] In his early exegesis of Romans, Augustine reasons thus:

> As long as you are a molded thing, says Paul, and you are like this lump of clay, not yet led to spiritual things so that as a spiritual being you might judge all things and be judged by no one, it behooves you to restrain yourself from this sort of inquiry and not to answer back to God.[25]

The confidence expressed in the midrash, however, is not that of a righteous or spiritual individual, but of a people—"Thus Israel spoke before the Holy One, blessed be He." The communal nature of the relationship receives additional support from the second prooftext, Jeremiah 18:6—"Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my mind, *O house of Israel*."[26]

[23] John Chrysostom, *Hom. XXXII in Epist. ad Romanos* 16:7; Migne, *PG* 60, 558-559. See further references to this theme in Gorday, *Principles of Patristic Exegesis*, pp. 311-312, n. 84.

[24] *De Principiis* III, 1.22; G. W. Butterworth (tr.), Origen. *On First Principles* (1936; Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1973) p. 205.

[25] *Propositions from the Epistle to Romans* 62, 19; Frederiksen, *Augustine on Romans*, pp. 36-37. On this passage, see Souter (above, n. 1), pp. 188-190.

[26] Richard Hays (*Echoes of Scripture* p. 66) argues forcefully this very meaning for the Pauline text: "the allusion to Jeremiah 18 in Rom. 9:20-21 ... anticipates the resolution of Paul's argument in Romans 11." In his homiletic discourse on the Jeremiah passage, Origen reveals a deep awareness of the national context, and transforms that awareness into a discourse on two nations (Jer. 18:7-10): the new people of the promise and the former people of Israel—"taken into captivity, their city in ruins, their Temple destroyed, the altar profaned; for God said to that people, 'Repent,' and they did not repent." Origen, *Hom. in Ierem.* 18, 5; *Homélies sur Jérémie*, ed. P. Nautin, vol. II [SC 238] (Paris: Cerf, 1977) pp. 189-195. On this motif, see Nautin's discussion in vol. I [SC 232] 161-164.

III. The Olive Tree (Rom. 11:17-24)

Paul's examination of the mechanism of salvation, the curious manner in which the failure of the Jews has spelled salvation for the Gentiles, leads him to the famous "metaphor" of the olive tree. It is an image of the Church: the natural branches are those (few) Jews who have accepted Christ; the branches of the wild olive grafted in are the Gentiles who have come to Christ; the branches broken off are the (many) Jews who have failed to recognize Christ. Paul's message is one of caution for the Gentile Christians:

> If you do boast, remember that it is not you that supports the root, but the root that supports you. You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. (11:18-21)

and of continued hope for the unbelieving Jews:

> And even the others, if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree. (11:23-24)

The figure employed by Paul is an exceptional one, not easily documented either in agricultural practice or literary sources, and much debate has ensued regarding its point of origin.[27] The olive tree appears in the Hebrew Bible as a common metaphor for Israel (Jer. 11:16; Hos. 14:6; Amos 4:9; Hag. 2:19; *et al.*) but nowhere in the peculiar detail or development that one finds in Romans 11. The cogent suggestion has recently been made that the image is a classic Mediterranean one adapted by Paul "which evoked the cultured pagan world."[28] Whatever its origins, the figure was to have a lasting impression on the early Church's understanding of its relationship to Jews and Judaism.

[27] I have not seen, unfortunately, the fullest treatment of the passage: M. M. Bourke, *A Study of the Metaphor of the Olive Tree in Romans XI* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1947).

[28] W. D. Davies, "Romans 11:13-24. A Suggestion," in *Paganisme, Judaïsme, Christianisme*. Mélanges offerts à Marcel Simon (Paris: de Boccard, 1978) pp. 131-144.

Perhaps most deeply influenced, and most closely in accord with Paul's own intention, is the exegesis of Origen. Striking in particular is Origen's frequent introduction of the figure of the olive tree in the course of his ethical reinterpretation of standard proof-texts for the rejection of Judaism. Indeed, it has been argued that Romans 11 stands at the very center of Origen's perception of the relation between the Church and Synagogue.[29] Yet the irenic quality of Origen's approach too had its limits, as witnessed by the use of the image in the context of Jewish responsibility for the persecution and death of Christ:

> "They will not be forgotten forever" (Jer. 20:11 LXX). They think that their sins will be forgotten in this age, but we see that their sins "will not be forgotten forever," and seeing that we remember "Do not become proud, but stand in awe. For if God did not spare the natural branches," how much less "will he not spare" those who are not natural.[30]

True to Paul's intent, Origen has warned his (Gentile) Christian congregation neither to boast nor become confident; the Jews, however, have paid a heavy price in the process.

Still more pronounced is the use made of Romans 11:17-24 in the "Adversus Iudaeos" literature of the early Church. Both John Chrysostom and Augustine open their respective works against Jews and Judaizing Christians with the figure of the olive tree. Preaching in Antioch in the autumn of 386, Chrysostom begins his first discourse thus:

> But do not be surprised that I called the Jews pitiable. They really are pitiable and miserable. When so many blessings from heaven came into their hands, they thrust them aside and were at great pains to reject them. The morning Sun of Justice arose for them, but they thrust aside its rays and still sit in darkness. We, who were nurtured by darkness, drew the light to ourselves and were freed from the gloom of their

[29] See H. Bietenhard, *Caesarea, Origenes und die Juden* [Franz Delitzsch Vorlesungen 1972] (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1974) pp. 61-73 ("Das Verständnis für Rom 11 bei Origenes"); de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, pp. 75-87; and the comments of W. Horbury in *JThS* 30 (1979) pp. 327-328. This is nowhere more pronounced than in Origen's polemic with paganism: see *Contra Celsum* VI, 80. For the broader context, see K. H. Schelkle, "Kirche und Synagoge in der frühen Auslegung des Römerbrief," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 134 (1954) 290-318 (= *Wort und Schrift*: 282-299).

[30] Origen, *Hom. in Ierem*, 20, 9; ed. P. Nautin, vol. II [SC 238] (Paris, 1977) p. 297; translation based on that of J. W. Trigg, *Biblical Interpretation* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988) p. 92.

> error. They were the branches of that holy root, but those branches were broken. We had no share in that root, but we did reap the fruit of godliness.[31]

In bitterly paradoxical fashion, Paul's metaphor has been pressed into the service of an anti-Jewish polemic. Less strident, though no less pointed, is Augustine's use of Romans at the outset of his treatise:

> The blessed apostle Paul . . . instils fear in us by example when he says: "Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness." (Rom. 11:22) Assuredly he said this about the Jews who, as branches of that olive tree which was fruitful in its root of the holy Patriarchs, have been broken off on account of their unbelief, so that, because of the faith of the Gentiles, the wild olive was grafted on and shared in the richness of the true olive tree after the natural branches had been cut off. . . . By the just severity of God, therefore, the unbelieving pride of the native branches is broken away from the living patriarchal root, and, by the grace of divine kindness, the faithful humility of the wild olive is ingrafted.[32]

One hears Paul in Augustine's words, but still more clearly one hears the language of rejection and annulment, of the displacement of the old Israel by the new.

Could the Rabbis have been mindful of the role of the olive tree in early Christian thought? Their own exegesis of the metaphor as it appears in the prophets is generally rather straightforward and unenhanced. There is a singular passage, however, constructed around the interpretation of Jeremiah 11:15-16, where one senses something more. The biblical text reads as follows:

[31] *Homiliae adversus Iudaeos* 1.2; Migne, *PG* 48, 845; *Discourses against Judaizing Christians*, trans. by P. W. Harkins [Fathers of the Church 68] (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1977) p. 5. On these sermons and their historical context, see Wilken (above, n. 6).

[32] *Tractatus adversus Iudaeos* 1, 1; Migne, *PL* 42, 51; tr. by M. Liguori in *Treatises on Marriage and Other Subjects* [Fathers of the Church 27] (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1955) pp. 391-392. Note too Augustine's resumption of the theme and imagery at 6, 7 (*PL* 42, 55) and at the conclusion of the treatise (10, p. 15; *PL* 42, 63-64). On the treatise, see B. Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der jüdisch-christlichen Beziehungen in den ersten Jahrhunderten* (Basler Beiträge zur Geschichtswissenschaft 25] (Basel: von Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1946).

"What right has my beloved in my house, when she has done vile deeds? Can vows and sacrificial flesh avert your doom? Can you then exult?
The Lord called you, 'A green olive tree, fair with goodly fruit'; but with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed."

The initial verse (Jer. 11:15) is a famous *crux interpretationis*, and our own attention should be focused on the Rabbis' reading of the biblical text:

What has my beloved to do in my house;
She has done vile deeds with many;
The sanctified flesh has been removed;
When you have done evil, will you then exult?

With the scriptural text well in mind, let us turn to the tractate *Menachot* (53b) of the Babylonian Talmud:

Rabbi Isaac said: at the time of the destruction of the Temple the Holy One, blessed be He, found Abraham standing in the Temple.
He said to him: *What has my beloved to do in my house?*
Abraham replied: I have come in a matter concerning my children.
He said: Your children have sinned and gone into exile.
Abraham answered: Perhaps they sinned only in error.
He said to him: *She has done vile deeds* (intentionally).
Abraham said: Perhaps only a few of them sinned.
He said to him: *With many*.
Abraham said: You should have remembered the covenant of circumcision.
He said to him: *The sanctified flesh has been removed.*
Abraham replied: Perhaps if you had waited for them they would have repented.
He said to him: *When you have done evil, will you then exult?*
At that moment Abraham put his hand on his head and wept and cried: Perhaps, heaven forbid, there is no hope for them!
A Voice from Heaven came forth and said to him: *The Lord called you, A green olive tree, fair with goodly fruit*—as the olive tree produces its harvest at the very end, so Israel will flourish at the very end.

This exegetical tour-de-force is then augmented in the Talmud by two further interpretations of the image of the olive tree:

> Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said: Why is Israel likened to an olive tree? To tell you that as the olive tree loses its leaves neither in summer nor in winter, so Israel will never be undone, neither in this world nor in the world to come.
> Rabbi Yochanan said: Why is Israel likened to an olive tree? To tell you that just as the olive produces its oil only after pounding, so Israel mends her ways only after suffering.[33]

The ingenious dialogue between God and Abraham is set in the deeply significant context of the Temple at the time of its destruction. The recurrent attempts by Abraham to plead for Israel, his "children," are met with verses from the prophet which charge their culpability. Only at the very conclusion, when Abraham has already despaired that "there is no hope for them" is divine solace forthcoming: Israel, like the olive tree, will bear its fruit only at the end. The two additional interpretations of the metaphor both clarify and complement this message. Will Israel be lost until the end of time? No, answers Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, Israel will never be abolished, "neither in this world nor in the world to come." Why must Israel, then, suffer so grievously? In order that she might repent, answers Rabbi Yochanan. Abraham, the father of the covenant, hears that covenant between God and Israel reaffirmed at the very hour of destruction.

IV. Scripture and Dialogue

The Fathers of the Church read, meditated upon, and exegeted chapters 9-11 of Romans; the Rabbis, their contemporaries, clearly did not. They did, however, devote their best intelligence and energy to an interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, the Scriptures which underlay Paul's own thought. This shared orientation toward biblical interpretation as the highest form of intellectual and spiritual activity can be said to have united Paul, the Rabbis, and the Fathers in a uniquely significant manner.

In the course of this ongoing confrontation with Scripture, one senses in both the Rabbinic and Patristic sources from the period a tension, a constant tendency toward closure which is being resisted. The Rabbis, despite innumerable pressures to the contrary, maintained a posture of openness to the Gentile world. The notion of the covenant between God and Israel, so central in every respect, never was allowed to totally eclipse the recognition of

[33] On this passage (b. *Menachot* 53b), see Urbach, *The Sages*, I, p. 540. All of the rabbinic authorities cited in this passage are well-known figures of third-century Palestine; see A. Marmorstein, "Judaism and Christianity in the Middle of the Third Century," *HUCA* 10 (1935): 223-263.

the unity of mankind.[34] The Fathers, in the face of a very different set of pressures, struggled to comprehend the role play by Judaism and her adherents. This came as a result of the decision, perhaps inevitable, of the second-century Church not to sever herself from her biblical roots—a decision which spelled a standing need to define herself over against and in distinction to the Jewish people. The manner in which early Christians addressed this need was to be determined, in no small way, by their understanding of what Paul had preached and written.

We have enjoyed for more than a generation the reintegration of Paul into the thought-world and religious context of early Judaism.[35] After a century of research we remain at a certain remove, though a clearly negotiable one, from a deep understanding of the early Church's attitude toward both Jews and Judaism.[36] Will it ever be possible to turn the tables, to speak meaningfully about the image of early Christians and Christianity in the eyes of Rabbis? Possibly not, given the nature of the surviving literature; almost certainly not in the strict sense that the historian would properly demand. Yet it may be possible to recover something of a lost dialogue, to assess the "hidden proximity" which marks the worlds of the Rabbis and the Fathers.[37] The necessary tools, as I have attempted to demonstrate, are a sensitivity to underlying biblical tradition and a respect for exegetical creativity. The ensuing dialogue is likely to be halting, marked by long silences and barely comprehensible snatches of ill-tempered repartee, but it is one of deep significance for the history of Judaism, Christianity, and the relationship between the two faiths.

In closing, permit me to stray for a moment from my proper mandate—the early understanding of Romans 9-11 and the relationship between Israel and the Church—and to inquire after the structure of Paul's argument itself.[38] Is it random choice that brings Paul, in the course of his deliberation

[34] See M. Kadushin, "Aspects of the Rabbinic Concept of Israel. A Study in the Mekilta," *HUCA* 19 (1945-46): 57-96; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (SCM: London, 1977) pp. 84-107, 206-212; E. E. Urbach, "Self-Isolation or Self-Affirmation in Judaism in the First Three Centuries: Theory and Practice," in Sanders (above, n. 6) pp. 269-298, 413-417.

[35] May it suffice to mention the work of W. D. Davies and E. P. Sanders, its influence, and the continuing dialogue between them.

[36] See the studies listed above, nn. 5-6. For surveys of the scholarship, see E. Lamirande, "Étude bibliographique sur les pères de l'église et l'aggadah," *VC* 21 (1967): 1-11 and J. R. Baskin, "Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts in Late Antiquity: A Bibliographical Reappraisal," in W. S. Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism V. Studies in Judaism and its Greco-Roman Context* [Brown Judaica Studies 32] (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985) pp. 53-80.

[37] The phrase is that of my colleague G. G. Stroumsa from an acute review of de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 2 (1981) pp. 170-175 [Hebrew].

[38] Indeed, students of the history of interpretation must never delude themselves into the false assurance that their investigations are likely to bring them any closer to the original

on the future of Israel, to employ the dual imagery of clay in the potter's hands and a flourishing olive tree? Perhaps not. Students of Romans 9-11 have long remarked on the relevance of the Jewish background of Paul's thought for an understanding of these chapters, particularly the statement in Rom. 11:26a—"and so all Israel will be saved." Most often cited is the famous opening of the Mishnah from the treatise *Sanhedrin* (10:1): "All Israel has a share in the world to come."[39] Attention does not seem to have been paid, however, to the accompanying prooftext from Isaiah 60:21—

> All Israel has a share in the world to come,
> for it is written,
> "Your people shall all be righteous;
> they shall possess the land for ever,
> the shoot of my planting, the work of my hands,
> that I might be glorified."[40]

"The shoot of my planting, the work of my hands":

נצר מטעו מעשה ידי.

Might Paul not have inherited these potent images together with his deep, anguished concern for the future of his people?

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meaning of the scriptural text. Nevertheless, it is certainly to be hoped that the exposure to early exegesis and its peculiar sensitivities might prepare readers for a fresh approach to the scriptural text itself.

[39] M. *Sanhedrin* 10:1— כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא; see Strack-Billerbeck, III, p. 293. For a discussion of the text, and its antiquity, see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 147-149.

[40] Isa. 60:21 (LXX) concludes εἰς δόξαν—cf. Romans 9:4, 9:23.

Calvin and the Jews: A Textual Puzzle

by Mary Potter Engel

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Long familiar with Calvin's *Commentary on Romans* in the context of the grace/works debate, I returned to it with confidence to determine Calvin's interpretation of Paul's view of "the Church and Israel" in Rom. 9-11. But my confidence proved to be unfounded. For as I reread these chapters I became only more puzzled. It seemed to me that Calvin's interpretation was just as full of contradictions as Paul's text. For example, Calvin says both that the covenant God made with Israel is eternal and that the Jews have broken it; both that the Jews were and still are privileged and that they are guilty of the "great crime of unbelief."

To make sense of this puzzle I consulted secondary sources. Calvin Pater's conclusion, that "Basically [Calvin] clung to Paul's position in Romans, without Paul's contradictions and inner conflicts, to say that the Jews, after Christ, had been cut off from their own legacy,"[1] oversimplifies Calvin. Salo Baron's conclusion, that the basic meaning of Romans 9-11 for Calvin is that "their [the Jews] greatest crime consisted in their lack of faith" also avoids the complexity of Calvin's position, though he at least acknowledges Calvin's "inconclusiveness."[2] Finding no help for my puzzlement here, I turned next to the available theories for explaining apparent contradictions in Calvin's theology: the view that Calvin is primarily a scriptural exegete whose work reflects the contradictions of the original texts; Richard Stauffer's thesis (based on evidence from his sermons on creation) that Calvin is finally incoherent on some issues; my own thesis that Calvin's anthropological contradictions are adequately understood in terms of his perspectival approach to theology; and, more specifically, Mary Sweetland Laver's thesis that Calvin's diverse statements on the Jews can be understood as part of his polemic against the Anabaptists and the Romans.[3] No one of these, however, yielded a satisfying interpretation of the perplexing Commentary on Romans 9-11.

[1] Calvin Augustine Pater, "Calvin, the Jews, and the Judaic Legacy," *In Honor of John Calvin, 1509-64: Papers from the 1986 International Calvin Symposium*, ed. Edward J. Furcha. (Montreal: McGill University, 1987): 256-95.

[2] Salo W. Baron, "John Calvin and the Jews," in *Harry Austyn Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, eds. Leo Walter Schwarz et al. 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1965): 1:141-63.

[3] Richard Stauffer, *Dieu, la création et la providence dans la prédication de Calvin* (Berne: Peter Lang, 1978); Mary Potter Engel, *John Calvin's Perspectival Anthropology* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988); Mary Sweetland Laver, "Calvin, Jews, and Intra-Christian Polemics" (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1989. Temple University, 1988). I was greatly

To solve the continuing puzzle I finally decided to take a long detour through Calvin's sermons, hoping to find some interpretive clues in that voluminous source. I chose the sermons rather than the *Institutes*, treatises, other biblical commentaries, the tract *Ad quaestiones et obiecta Judaei cuiusdam Responsio*, or the proceedings of the trial of Servetus, as my source for four reasons. First, the sermons yield many more references to the Jews and Judaism than his other works.[4] Second, many of Calvin's other texts focus attention on the classical theological topics Christians normally associate with the relationship between Christianity and Judaism, which can be misleading. For example, in looking only at what he says about the law or the two testaments, one might miss Calvin's more negative comments on "the Jews." Third, these other documents are written for and accessible to a more limited audience of elite theologians or ecclesiastics than that to which the sermons were addressed. While ideas passed on in this more formal way have a strong influence in the history of Christianity's relationship with Judaism and the Jews, I am more interested in the possible impact Calvin's pedagogical use of the trope of "the Jews" in his evangelical reconstruction of Christianity had upon the everyday folk who listened to him preach week in and week out in Geneva. Finally, the goal of Calvin's teaching and exhortation in his sermons is clearly a practical one. He never fails to tell his hearers "how we are to practice this passage" or learn how to "profit in the school of God."[5] His metaphor of God as Teacher and human beings as students is second only to that of God as Father and human beings as children. For Calvin there was no unbridgeable gap between rhetoric and life.

I quickly discovered in reading the sermons that Calvin does not cast the issue in terms of "the Church and Israel." Rather, he uses the trope of "the Jews" and a wide variety of related titles: "the Hebrews," "God's people," "the children of Abraham," "the children of Moses," "the children of God," "the children of the promise," "the ancient fathers," "the holy Patriarchs,"

tempted to make sense out of this puzzle by employing my perspectival thesis. Calvin's distinctions between natural/spiritual dignity, external/internal discernment of the church, and the majority/remnant, and his use of the kind of rhetorical clues I underline in the quotations of footnotes 7, 11-14, and 25-26 *can* be read as evidence supporting the claim that from the perspective of God the covenant remains fast and from the perspective of humankind it is lost. I concluded for the time being, however, that I did not have enough textual evidence to support such a thesis in this case.

[4] Baron noted the possibility of using the sermons to gather this kind of data many years ago ("John Calvin and the Jews," pp. 1-2, fn. 1).

[5] *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia*, eds. Wilhelm Baum, Edward Cunitz, and Edward Reuss, 59 vols. (Brunsvigae: C. A. Schwetscke, 1863-1900) [Cited hereafter as CO]. CO:34:39, s. on Job; and CO41:472, s. on Dan. See also CO53:156, s. on I Tim.; CO34 42, s. on Job; CO41:498, s. on Dan; CO32:497, 628, 633, s. on Ps. 119.

"the ancient Church," "the people of Israel," and "the Israelites," to speak of Christianity's relationship to Jews and Judaism. Finding no reliable link between the particular title used and Calvin's theological evaluation, I had to ask myself in each instance, To what group is he referring? In what period of salvation-history? For what purpose? With what judgment? My argument for interpreting his use of these various titles moves through a discussion of Calvin's view of God's eternal election and the church and an analysis of the several ways he uses "the Jews" as teaching examples before proceeding to some provisional conclusions about Calvin's Commentary on Romans 9-11 and his general stance toward the Jews and Judaism.

I. The One Church of God's Elect

One of the main clues for understanding Calvin's complicated pedagogical use of the trope of "the Jews" in his sermons is his doctrine of the electing grace of God and the church. This clue, however, is not a straightforward one. For on the one hand Calvin insists that the covenant God made with "the Jews" cannot be abrogated. Yet on the other hand he insists that "the Jews" have abrogated that covenant and have been cast out of the household of God permanently. Both claims need to be explored.

According to Calvin, the people of Israel, the children of Abraham, were chosen to be God's adopted children, elected to be a people set apart for the service of God.[6] Furthermore, when God makes such a promise of salvation to God's heirs, it is certain that God will never reject them. Thus Calvin insists that while "the nation of Jews . . . *tried* to annul or destroy their alliance with God by their infidelity," God remains faithful and accomplishes his promises.[7]

Expounding on Ephesians 2:3, he commends Paul for not rejecting the Jews but for considering them in "this quality of the elect and special people." Yet he goes on here to make his familiar theological point concerning all election, including that of "the Jews": individuals and peoples are not chosen because of their merit or "nature," which they all share equally with fallen Adam, but because of the sheer good pleasure of God.[8] God chose "the Jews" to be "his Church" and to be Father to them out of the liberality of God's grace.[9] In drawing out the lesson of the Jacob and Esau story for

[6] CO26:485, s. on Dt.; CO27:281-82, s. on Dt.; CO28:78, 86, 88, s. on Dt.

[7] CO46:55, s. on Harmony of the Gospels [Hereafter cited as HE], (emphasis mine). All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[8] CO51:362, s. on Eph. See also CO58:77, s. on Ez.

[9] CO28:677, s. on Dt.; CO29:102, s. on Dt.; CO46:464-65.

his congregants, he says, "God does not elect us for our beautiful eyes . . . but in his eternal counsel and in himself."[10]

He explains in his sermon on Ephesians 1:13-14 that "Inasmuch as God has chosen the line of Abraham, one *could* judge that they had some natural dignity." But he quickly counters,

> This is true, *if* we consider the grace that God gave to them, that they are indeed to be preferred to the whole rest of the world. But if we take them as they are *in themselves*, we will find that they are empty of all justice. We need to return to this point, that God is neither beholden nor obliged to anyone, but he received the Jews by gratuitous adoption, not because they were more valuable than others, or because they could glorify themselves as much as they were able.[11]

Elsewhere he says circumspectly that "the Jews were *deemed* (*reputez*) as children of God and his householders."[12] He also points out that Moses often reminded "the Jews" that "It is for God to choose and to command what seems good to him";[13] and that at the same time they are chosen by God they are also part of the fallen mass of sinful humanity and are not to rely on their own merit.[14]

This careful distinction between natural and spiritual dignity does not prevent Calvin from insisting clearly on the spiritual dignity of "the Jews" and the eternity of God's covenant with them. God chose "the Jews" first and they always retain this dignity of the first born. For the promise was given to them first and only secondly to the rest of the world, making them "the flower of the Church, that is, the first born in the house of God."[15]

He also claims, however, that this unconditional and unbreakable covenant is conditional and breakable. God made the promises "on this condition: that they keep the commandments."[16] Thus, when "the Jews" confused natural and spiritual dignity and abused this favor of chosenness and gift of primogeniture to presume upon the grace of God or flatter themselves, they were rejected by God.[17] His language is clear and his judgment

[10] CO58:51, s. on Jacob and Esau.
[11] CO51:297, s. on Eph. (emphasis mine). See also CO26:647, s. on Dt.
[12] CO46:335, s. on HE (emphasis mine).
[13] CO27:166, s. on Dt. See also CO28:517, s. on Dt.
[14] CO54:459-60, s. on Tit.; CO51:361-62, s. on Eph.; CO46:143, s. on HE ("The Jews destroyed inasmuch as they were able their alliance with God. Nevertheless God always persisted in his plan."); CO41:687, s. on Dan.
[15] CO54:458, s. on Tit. See also CO50:484, 513, s. on Gal.
[16] CO27:132, s. on Dt.
[17] CO51:364, s. on Eph.

total: in their apostasy "the Jews" "falsified" (*faussé*) the promise that had been given them. In brief, they "banished themselves from his Church, even though they carry the title and the name and they glorify themselves with being the elect and chosen line."[18] By perverting completely the service of God, they alienated themselves from the hope of salvation, deprived themselves of God's gifts, and disinherited themselves from the kingdom.[19] Through their rejection of Jesus Christ "the Jews" renounced their dignity and the promise of salvation and deprived themselves of all benefits attributed to them as the race of Abraham.[20] Thus he says unequivocally that the line of adoption is broken (*rompue*) and the people of Israel are "rejected by God."[21]

Calvin's interpretation of two classic Bible stories of elder and younger brothers supports this view that the covenant has been abrogated. Building on the contrast between natural and spiritual lineage, he reminds his hearers that Ishmael was the son of Abraham by the flesh; yet even though "he seemed to have the right of primogeniture," mocked his younger brother, and tried to destroy the promise given to him, God chose to bless Isaac.[22] Likewise Esau, even though the first born, was not chosen by God.[23] While he stops short of calling "the Jews" Ishmaelites or Edomites, he clearly intends these stories as a serious warning to "the Jews" and to his contemporary Christians not to interpret the promise of salvation, the favor of chosenness, the gifts of adoption, in natural rather than spiritual terms.

If we focused only on this second claim of Calvin, that "the Jews" abrogated the covenant, we could build a tight case for reading Calvin as a supersessionist. But the evidence does not allow for this for a number of reasons. First, we have to focus equally on his first claim for the eternity of the covenant from the perspective of God the Elector. Second, we have to take seriously the fact that Calvin at times simultaneously affirms both that the covenant is eternal and that it has been ruptured. For example, noting that although Reuben lost his primogeniture and dignity, God retained him among the number of God's people, he concludes that we, like "the Jews," are held always in the line of Abraham.[24] His careful language in the following quote reflects a similar conjunction of these different points of view.

[18] CO46:40-41, s. on HE; CO49:670, s. on 1 Cor.

[19] CO54:137, s. on 2 Tim.; CO8:379-80, s. Against Idolatry.

[20] CO47:483, s. on Passion of Lord Jesus Christ. It is clear that the promise to Christians is also conditional, for "We must separate ourselves from evil people, if we want God to elect us" (CO54:182, s. on 2 Tim.).

[21] CO27:6, s. on Dt.

[22] CO54:405-06, s. on Tit.

[23] CO41:338, s. on Dan.; CO58:42, s. on Jacob and Esau.

[24] CO29:127, s. on Dt.

> When the Jews were banished from this land [Canaan, "a mirror of the kingdom of Heaven and the celestial heritage"], it was *as if* God had thrown them out of his house, saying: "I disavow you. I renounce you." Now this was to put them in despair. On the other hand, God had promised to regard them always with fatherly care, and always to make them prosper.[25]

Preaching on Deuteronomy he also places side by side the two judgments, saying:

> Now it is true that Moses magnifies greatly the people of Israel here. But we know that this privilege which was so highly esteemed was of no profit to those who rejected the law.... The Jews here are called a wise and understanding people, a noble nation, and said to have nothing but excellence and dignity in them. And why? Because God chose them, and manifested his judgments and rectitude in them. But on the other hand they are called blind, they are called deaf. And why? Because they extinguished, *inasmuch as they were able*, the clarity lit for them by God.[26]

Third, we have to acknowledge that Calvin stresses both that the chosenness of "the Jews" does not exclude the Gentiles and the chosenness of the Gentiles does not exclude the Jews. He repeatedly says that salvation was promised and Jesus Christ appeared not only to the line of Abraham but also to "those who had been rejected as it were (*comme*) by God."[27] Reversing this, he says that "the Jews must be joined with the Gentiles."[28] Salvation, therefore, is not only by displacement, as the supersessionist remarks indicate, but also by extension—in two directions, from Jews to the Gentiles and the Gentiles to the Jews. The key theological point for him is that it is God who chooses, without regard for Jew or Gentile.[29]

To hold these two claims about the covenant (that the promises of God are at once unconditional and conditional) and his two opposing models of salvation (extension and displacement) together, Calvin employs the scriptural view of the saved remnant and an Augustinian view of the church. The remnant theory, which allows him to distinguish between God's calling to "the Jews" as a people and to individual Jews, pervades his sermons. "The election of God, which was extended to the whole people, was not sufficient.

[25] CO28:548 S. on Dt. (emphasis mine).
[26] CO26:126 (emphasis mine). See also CO46:382, s. on HE.
[27] CO46:335, s. on HE. See also CO51:443, s. on Eph.
[28] CO51:485, s. on Eph.
[29] CO25:640, s. on Dt.; CO53:190-91, s. on 1 Tim.; CO50:527, s. on Gal.

But it was necessary that each one participate."[30] "All who are of Jacob according to the flesh, are not, however, true Israelites, that is, the people of God. Because he has two names ... Jacob and Israel."[31] The church descends from the race of Jacob but is not equal to it. For the true church "proceeds from the pure grace of God" and individuals can abuse the privilege of their descent.[32]

Calvin uses the one term "church" ambiguously to refer both to the majority called out by God and to the minority saved. The "church" refers broadly to the entire nation of Israel. "The children of Israel, this holy seed of Abraham, the chosen people, elect, and adopted by God, his heritage, his Church," are the ones to whom God showed great honor among the peoples of the world.[33] Thus he can call the entire nation of Israel before the gospel era "the faithful," "the poor faithful," "the primitive church," "the ancient (*ancienne*) church," and "the church of the Jews."[34] This church is composed of both the majority of those who prove unfaithful and the minority who prove faithful.

The "church" also refers more narrowly to the saved remnant, the smaller number of elect individual "Jews" within the elect nation of "the Jews." Commenting on the ways the children of Israel perverted the service of God, he notes that "the church is immortal in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ," concluding that

> In this we see how God has sometimes hidden his Church underground, in a manner of speaking, and that it was not known according to the opinion of human beings; but it was enough that God knew it. ... Some have judged that the Church of God was wholly abolished. But we see how God safeguarded a small seed.[35]

With this called nation/elect remnant distinction Calvin is able to maintain: that God's promise to and election of the whole people of "the Jews" never changes, even after Jesus Christ;[36] that the unfaithful majority of individuals

[30] CO27:46, s. on Dt.

[31] CO58:36, s. on Jacob and Esau.

[32] CO58:39; CO58:41 s. on Jacob and Esau.

[33] CO28:610, s. on Dt.; CO41:662, s. on Dan. See also, CO26:516, s. on Dt.

[34] CO41:491, 640, s. on Dan.; CO41:486, s. on Dan. CO50:334, s. on Gal.; CO58:139, s. on Jacob and Esau; CO33:507, s. on Job.

[35] CO41:491, s. on Dan. It is clear that the one foundation of the promise and the church is Jesus Christ. See CO26:242-43, s. on Dt.; CO58:49, 96, s. on Jacob and Esau; CO51:318, s. on Eph.; CO46:23, s. on HE; CO51:419, s. on Eph.; CO58:20, s. on Jacob and Esau; CO51:389, s. on Eph.

[36] CO26:148, s. on Dt.

among this one people abrogated the covenant by not fulfilling the commandments; and that the faithful minority of individuals among this one people enjoys the fulfillment of the promises.

The contemporary church stands in a line of continuity with both the broader and the narrower meanings of the church in antiquity. The church as remnant stretches throughout history and is found in patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and contemporary Christians. From the ancient fathers to the present "there has never been but one Church of God."[37] Thus, we should not doubt that the promises made to God's church in antiquity are ours or that there is "a perpetual order in his Church."[38] His refrain highlighting this continuity of the remnant is "the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel."[39]

This insistence on the one church throughout history, both in the broader sense of all those elected to be the chosen people and the narrower sense of the saved remnant, enables Calvin to say that Christians are equal to "the Jews" as the people of God.[40] They are equally privileged[41] and equally sinful.[42] This insistence also enables him to apply the message of majority/minority, called nation/elect remnant, of the ancient church to the contemporary church. The lesson he draws from the remnant among "the Jews" of the primitive church is as follows:

> Let us learn not to judge whether the Church is present or not by what we see with our eyes. Rather, let us renounce this point of view (*a tous regards*) because we have been warned that God often has some small seed hidden, like the grain that doesn't show up in a large pile of straw, since the straw covers the grain which is small in number.[43]

Commenting on the majority of "the Jews' " self-flattery and the small number that tasted the power of the promise of salvation in the Redeemer, he concludes: "Now by this we are admonished that even though the Church is not very evident, nevertheless God always conserves some seed when it seems that all have perished."[44] He reassures his contemporary

[37] CO27:501, s. on Dt.; CO26:197, s. on Dt.

[38] CO49:587, s on 1 Cor. See also CO51:582, s. on Eph.; CO29:116, s. on Dt.; CO33:85, s. on Job.

[39] CO35:74, CO34:85, 577, s. on Dt.; CO26:282, s. on Dt.; CO28:355, s. on Dt.; CO49:620, s. on 1 Cor.; CO50:381, s. on Gal.; CO51:395, s. on Eph.; CO51:426, s. on Eph.

[40] CO49:582-83, s. on 1 Cor.

[41] CO33:218, s. on Job.

[42] CO26:466, s. on Dt.; CO26:713, s. on Dt.

[43] CO23:650, s. on Mel.

[44] CO46:366, s. on HE.

evangelicals struggling with the Roman church by teaching that the condition of the church has from the beginning been one of the unfaithful majority and the faithful minority, and that the promise that the church would number the stars in the sky is not to be judged "according to exterior appearance in which one can see the Church triumphant," but according to its spiritual transformation into the image of God.[45] This distinction in the ancient church is crucial for the recognition of the true church in his day. For as Saint Paul noted, God was offended by his people and "exterminated" (*exterminé*) many of them, even those who were circumcised and had this "exterior witness that God held them in his Church."[46] So the contemporary church should learn that the exterior witness of baptism is not sufficient without the internal transformation given to those who are the remnant.

Several comments on the mixed view of Jews and Judaism that appears in Calvin's sermons so far are in order here. First, Calvin, unlike so many unequivocally supersessionist Christian theologians, does not use the one term "Israel" for the chosen people before Christ and then claim that this "old" Israel is replaced by the "new" Israel of the Christian church. Instead, he uses the one term "children of God," "people of God," or "church" to refer to all of God's chosen (in both the broad and narrow sense), whether they are pre-, circa-, or post-gospel era. This stresses the unity and continuity of the one people of God in a way that the "old" Israel/"new" Israel language does not, implying that the one people of God includes both Jews and Gentiles. This observation is limited, however, by the fact that this same language can also be read as just another (more subtle) form of Christian imperialism. For it is clear that for Calvin the one church is founded on one covenant, which is grounded in the preexistent Christ.

Second, Calvin's use of the modifier "*ancienne*" before the church underscores the ambiguity of his message. For this same term means both "ancient" and "former," serving as an appropriate modifier for both the extension and the displacement model. Third, Calvin's use of the remnant theory, rather than logically solving the contradictions set up by the scriptures, maintains and even presses the tension between divine election and human responsibility, the unconditional nature of God's grace and the conditional nature of human response; and thus leaves us no closer to solving the puzzle of interpreting his perplexing *Commentary on Romans.*

Finally, the Augustinian view of the church that appears as both a mix-

[45] CO41:491, s. on Dan. See also CO28:226-27, s. on Dt.
[46] CO49:621, s. on 1 Cor.

ture of good and bad to the external eye and as an unfaithful majority and faithful minority to the spiritual eye, enables Calvin to use the trope of "the Jews" to further his argument for the legitimacy of the evangelical church that split from the church of Rome. As the following sections will show, Calvin uses "the Jews," understood broadly as called nation, more narrowly as unfaithful majority, and most narrowly as faithful minority, to argue for the truth of Christianity and the church reconstructed from an evangelical point of view.

II. "The Jews" and Christians

Because Calvin understands that the one God of grace and judgment chose and chooses *one* people, he is able to use "the Jews" as teaching examples for all contemporary Christians. They were and are the chosen people from whom Christians can and must learn. Frequently he reminds his congregants that the things taught in the scriptures do not pertain "only to the Jews, but also to us";[47] and that since holy doctrine is "perpetual in the church of God,"[48] they are "to receive the fruit of this doctrine given formerly (*anciennement*) to the Jews."[49] He sums up the way in which the history of "the Jews" serves the instruction of Christians this way: "I speak of similitude, this conformity that God made between the people of Israel and ourselves."[50]

Further, with his broad view of the church as the one called people containing both unfaithful *and* faithful persons, Calvin is able to focus on how "the Jews" are *like* Christians in *both* their faithfulness *and* their unfaithfulness. It is the history of "the Jews" *in its entirety* as "the church" that serves as an "example," "mirror," "witness," or "painting" in which contemporary Christians see the future and past and enables them to use scripture to their profit.[51] Two scenes contained within this *one* mirror in which the contemporary people of God are to learn how to avoid unfaithfulness and practice

[47] CO41:629, s. on Dan.

[48] CO25:676, s. on Dt.

[49] CO53:156, s. on 1 Tim. See also CO50:484, s. on Gal.

[50] CO27:667, s. on Dt. See also CO25:681-82, s. on Dt.; CO26:295, s. on Dt.; CO26:457, s. on Dt.: CO25:686, s. on Dt.; CO23:783, s. on Sacrifice of Abraham.

[51] CO49:581, s. on 1 Cor.; CO32:514-15, s. on JOB; CO41:654, s. on Dan. For a discussion of how Calvin's comments on the Jews and issues related to Judaism play into his arguments with the Roman Catholics and the Anabaptists, see Laver, *Calvin, Jews, and Intra-Christian Polemics*. For a discussion of his use of the trope of "the Jews" to criticize the "papists," see my essay "Calvin's Rhetorical Use of 'the Jews' in his Sermons," forthcoming in the 1989 Proceedings of the Calvin Studies Society, ed. Peter De Klerk (Grand Rapids, MI).

faithfulness will be highlighted: one in which "the Jews" are wholly good examples and one in which they are wholly bad examples.

When Calvin focuses on "the Jews" as wholly good examples to be emulated by contemporary Christians, he has in mind the faithful remnant of the chosen *in the pre-gospel era*; that is, not the whole mixed people of Israel but the "ancient Fathers," "holy Patriarchs" and all those unnamed persons among the people Israel who followed them. His specification of these fathers is critical, since antiquity alone is no guarantee of faithfulness. There is a "diversity" of "our fathers"; those who resisted the Holy Spirit and provoked God's wrath must be distinguished from those exalted by God—the ancient Fathers, the holy Patriarchs, "the *true* children of God."[52] Likewise a distinction needs to be made between the promise made to the whole people of Israel whom God chose and adopted, the hypocrites who under cover of God's name flattered themselves that they were children of Abraham, and those who sincerely followed the ancient Fathers.[53]

Calvin has nothing but the highest praise for the ancient Fathers. Abraham is called "the father of the faithful,"[54] David "the mirror of all righteousness."[55] God spoke by their mouths.[56] They knew the need to humble themselves before God and confess their sins.[57] They lived in hope of the Redeemer and with the sure knowledge that the heritage of salvation belonged to them and that the promise was unshakeable.[58] Thus, the invisible substance and truth of salvation was not lacking for them.[59] *These* ancient fathers and all "the faithful who lived under the Law," all "the poor faithful" or "martyrs" who endured captivity and resisted temptation, are positive examples for Christians who live "taught by the Gospel."[60] With all their faults, "they lived in this world as mirrors of total purity."[61]

If "our fathers," "the Jews," understood as the faithful remnant, are a positive example for all contemporary Christians (and especially for Reformed or evangelical Christians), "our fathers," "the Jews," understood as the unfaithful majority, are a negative example for all contemporary Chris-

[52] CO28:539, s. on Dt.; CO23:746, s. on Sacrifice of Abraham.
[53] CO46:125, s. on HE.
[54] CO23:666, s. on Mel.; CO33:27, s. on Job; CO35:574, s. on Ez.
[55] CO35:634, S. on Job.
[56] CO28:295, s. on Dt.; CO41:529-30, s. on Dan.; CO29:107, s. on Dt.; CO34:11-12, s. on Job.
[57] CO34:22, s. on Job.
[58] CO46:345, s. on HE.; CO:224-25, s. on Dt.
[59] CO27:100, s. on Dt.; CO25:623, s. on Dt.; CO41:590-91, s. on Dan.
[60] CO53:627, s. on 1 Tim.; CO41:640, s. on Dan.; CO46:214, s. on HE; CO8:401, 406, s. on Suffering Persecution; CO34:72, s. on Job.
[61] CO53:496, s. on 1 Tim.

tians (and especially for the "papists"). To the former they serve as a reminder of the potential for slipping away that is always present in the church; to the latter they serve as a warning of and judgment upon what happens to those who have slipped away. In light of traditional negative Christian stereotypes of the Jews, it is important to take special care in investigating exactly how Calvin uses "the Jews" as unfaithful majority as negative examples for Christians.

What are the ways "the Jews" as the majority slipped away from God? First and foremost, according to Calvin, they were unfaithful. They forgot God, in spite of all the grace he showed them.[62] Their shame is this disloyalty, the root of all sin. This led to ingratitude, the most fundamental sin in Calvin's theology as a whole. If God is so good as to choose, nourish and sustain, and teach us, we should praise God with our unceasing gratitude.[63] When *these* "Jews" complained that God kept them on a short leash and their condition was worse than that of pagans, when they refused to contemplate the works of God, they were guilty of ingratitude.[64]

The other fundamental sin in Calvin's theology as a whole and in his discussion of "majority Jews" is pride. In this case, when he uses it to condemn unfaithful "Jews" of the pre-gospel or circa-gospel times, pride takes the form of "the Jews" flattering themselves (*se vantoyent, se glorifioyent*) that God has chosen or adopted them or presuming upon the fact of their Abrahamic ancestry or primogeniture.[65] Their fault here is that instead of relying on the gratuitous mercy and election of God, they used their chosenness to trust in their own merits.[66]

It is significant that in this list of the fundamental sins of "the Jews" as the unfaithful majority, the classic Christian accusations of the Jews as stubborn, greedy, carnal, hypocritical, and legalistic do not take precedence. Though Calvin does add many of these to his list, they appear much more infrequently. He does characterize them as rebellious, calling them "difficult to govern," "deaf and blind," and a "stiff-necked people."[67] His distinctive twist on this theme, however, is that they became stupid and "brutish," not because of their carnal desires but because they were poor students of

[62] CO26:451, s. on Dt. See also CO28:713, s. on Dt. See also CO26:457, s. on Dt.
[63] CO28:503, s. on Dt.
[64] CO27:296, s. on Dt. See also CO46:520, s. on HE; CO35:535, s. on Ez.
[65] CO46:517, s. on HE; CO27:55, s. on Dt.; CO28:653-54, s. on Dt.; CO46:532, s. on HE; CO28:256, s. on Dt.
[66] CO35:603, 627, s. on Is. 53.
[67] CO26:485, 661, s. on Dt.; CO27:313, s. on Dt.; CO28:489, s. on Dt.; CO26:653, s. on Dt.; See also, CO26:299, s. on Dt.

the good schoolmaster God. Their deafness to God led them to rebellion and disobedience.[68]

He mentions also their hypocrisy and idolatry. Their sacrilegious use of ceremonies ordained by God (by filling them in letter/mouth only and not in spirit/heart) led to their condemnation by Moses.[69] So did their abuse of God's gift of the law by following it formally but not in substance.[70] Their adoption of pagan practices and interpretations when they were supposed to be a people set apart is a further sign of their apostasy.[71]

Calvin also sounds the theme of "the Jews" as rejecters of Jesus Christ, though without playing into the classic rhetoric of abuse of "Christ-killers." All the above-mentioned neutral, positive, and negative uses of "the Jews" refer to pre- or circa-gospel era Jews. Calvin's references to circa- and post-gospel "Jews" are virtually all negative. He insists that these "Jews" rejected Jesus Christ and in so doing rejected the grace of God in the covenant. And in this one act is contained all of their sins—ingratitude, pride, rebellion, the stubborn refusal to repent, and their hypocrisy.[72] The "enormous crime" of this rejection was the culmination of their long history of defection and *attempts* to "destroy wholly the grace of God" (*aneanti toute la grace de Dieu*).[73] Jesus Christ's ignominious death *today* is scandal among "the Jews" and Jesus Christ himself blames them for their rejection of the Word he sent.[74]

In this ultimate test of their covenantal loyalty, "the Jews" failed utterly. "The Jews by their disloyalty cut themselves out totally from the house of God, and *tried, inasmuch as they were able*, to abolish his truth."[75] When they didn't recognize that their adoption was founded on Jesus Christ, they gave up their hope that God would have pity on them.[76] They so provoked God's wrath in rejecting Jesus Christ, and thus the Father, that they were banished. "Now since the Jews alienated themselves from the house of God and his Church, and did not accept the grace offered to them, their place re-

[68] CO35:275, s. on Job.; CO25:608, s. on Dt.; CO27:314, s. on Dt.; CO26:676, s. on Dt.; CO28:267, s. on Dt.

[69] CO28:112, s. on Dt.; CO27:320, s. on Dt.; CO26:285, s. on Dt.; CO53:23, s. on 1 Tim.; CO32:732, s. on Ps. 119; CO51:752, s. on Eph.

[70] CO28:219, s. on Dt.; CO27:589, s. on Dt.; CO27:494, s. on Dt.

[71] CO46:683, s. on HE; CO27:691, s. on Dt.

[72] CO51:412, s. on Eph.; CO46:917, s. on Passion; CO29:9-11, s. on Dt.; CO50:352-53, s. on Gal.; CO28:455, s. on Dt.; CO51:427, s. on Eph.

[73] CO29:13, s. on Dt.

[74] CO34:578, s. on Job; CO41:514, s. on Dan.; CO46:900, s. on Passion; CO35:65, s. on Is. 53.

[75] CO50:645, s. on Gal. (emphasis mine). See also CO51:412, s. on Eph.; CO46:918, s. on Passion; CO28:455, s. on Dt.

[76] CO46:264, s. on HE. See also CO23:280, s. on Dt.; CO51:282, s. on Eph.; CO46:906, s. on Passion.

mained empty and *we* enter there; because God banished them in order to make a new house."[77] There is a definite and seemingly irreparable rupture here in the covenant and "the Jews" no longer enjoy the privilege they once did, forfeiting that to the whole world "without any difference."[78] According to Calvin, Daniel prophesies that Jesus Christ will no longer recognize "the Jews" as his own, and that "the people of the Jews will be ruined and that the Church of God will advance."[79] That is, Gentiles will henceforth be included as children of God according to the spirit.

Calvin uses the remnant theory pedagogically to press yet again the tension between his two opposing claims for the covenant and his two models of salvation. Thus, here as well our investigation of Calvin's use of the trope of "the Jews" in his sermons fails to solve the puzzle of interpretation with which we began. Further, if we note that Calvin adds to these two scenes from the history of "the Jews" a third, in which "the Jews" appear as *both* more *and* less privileged, *both* less *and* more culpable than Christians (a view or pedagogical use found as frequently in the sermons as the other two but which I am unable to demonstrate here because of time), the puzzle only gets more complicated.

III. Conclusion

A simple assessment of Calvin and "the Jews," even on the basis of this limited study, is difficult to make; for Calvin's complex pedagogical use of the trope of "the Jews" makes it impossible to take any one of his many different uses as his exclusive or definitive word. My conclusions, therefore, necessarily fall somewhere between pardon and condemnation.

If we take seriously the fact that Calvin uses "the Jews" in many positive ways and stresses the continuity of the one church in history as composed of both unfaithful and faithful Jews and unfaithful and faithful Christians, we cannot conclude simply that Calvin was an enemy of the Jews and Judaism. His emphasis on the unconditional and unbreakable promise of the one gracious God; his refusal to split the people of God into those "bad" Jews and us "good" Christians; his failure to project all sinfulness onto the Jews in order to create the image of a pure and spotless Christianity; his refusal to substitute the church as new Israel for the old; his use of an extension model of salvation—these all argue against a straightforward negative assessment of his role in the history of Christianity's relationship with the Jews

[77] CO29:11, s. on Dt.; CO29:13, s. on Dt.

[78] CO41:607, s. on Dan.

[79] CO41:608-09, s. on Dan. See also CO41:431, s. on HE ("the Jews" are like "*chiens mastins*," barking when they cannot bite).

and Judaism. So does his recurrent theme that no one should presume on the grace of God, even Christians in relation to post-gospel era "Jews." Calvin's reminder in his Commentary on Romans 9-11 that anyone who presumes upon their status as favored younger brother runs the danger of becoming the rejected elder brother, *including Christians who think they have totally displaced the Jews as God's elect*, stands as a strong warning against supersessionism.[80]

But if we also take seriously the fact that Calvin uses "the Jews" in many negative ways and stresses the failure of "the Jews" to fulfill the terms of the covenant, we also cannot conclude simply that he is a friend to the Jews and Judaism. His perpetuation of many traditional negative stereotypes of and traditional abusive rhetoric toward Jews; his failure to say virtually anything positive about circa- and post-gospel era Jews; his grounding of the one covenant of the one God with the one people in a preexistent Christ; his use of the displacement model of salvation—these all argue against an unequivocally positive assessment of his role in the history of Christianity's relationship to the Jews and Judaism.[81] In fact, much of his strong language contrasting adopted Christians and rejected Jews easily supports traditional Christian supersessionism.

If neither of these sides predominates in his sermons, how then are we to evaluate Calvin's role in the history of Christianity's relationship to the Jews and Judaism on the basis of this evidence? Certainly not by pointing to one side exclusively, as many scholars have done. For example, A. C. Adcock, who spends more time discussing Luther and Zwingli, quickly passes on a judgment that Calvin's burning of Servetus was an attempt to burn away the influence of Judaism on Christianity.[82] Shimon Markish notes parenthetically in his *Erasmus and the Jews* that "not for nothing did another collection, *Kirche und Synagoge*, characterize Calvin as a virulent Jew-hater who entirely shared Luther's opinion."[83]

[80] John Calvin, *Commentary on Romans and Thessalonians*, eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. Ross Mackenzie (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), pp. 252-53.

[81] Calvin's relatively infrequent references to contemporary Jews in his sermons all have to do with "rabbinic interpreters" of the scriptures, whom he always compares negatively to "Christian doctors," who understand the passages correctly. Supersessionism is clearly implied here in his boast that "We know your own scriptures better than you do yourselves!" See CO33:25, s. on Job; CO8:447, Four Sermons; CO29:217, s. on Dt.; CO26:321, 326, s. on Dt.

[82] A. C. Adcock, "Renaissance and Reformation," in *Judaism and Christianity*, ed. H. Loewe. 2 vols. (Cincinnati: KTAV Publishing House, 1969), 2:257.

[83] Shimon Markish, *Erasmus and the Jews*, trans. Anthony Olcott (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1986), p. 2.

If these interpretations are inadequate, so are those that focus on the positive "affinities" only. Leo Baeck's passing references to Calvinism in his essay "Romantic Religion" and Clark M. Williamson's summary of Calvin's relation to the Jews and Judaism in his survey *Has God Rejected His People? Anti-Judaism in the Christian Church* illustrate some of the common ways Calvin's relationship to the Jews and Judaism are generalized in an equally one-sided, though positive, way. Baeck applauds "Calvinistic piety" for "its affinity to the Old Testament, its 'legalistic' orientation, and its ethical stress on proving oneself" as a sign of its reversion to classical religion.[84] Williamson repeats this common view, saying that later Calvinists had a "more benevolent" attitude toward the Jews because of Calvin's high view of Hebrew scriptures and the place of the law in Christian life, and his claim that the Old and New Testaments are identical in substance and different in form.[85] Pater's summary that "In attempting to establish equity between both the Old and the New Testament, Calvin's theology was the least inequitable or anti-Judaic of the major classical theological systems" is similarly inadequate in its one-sidedness.[86]

We also cannot solve this puzzle by resorting to excuses for Calvin's negative evaluations of "the Jews" and Judaism. These excuses include the following: that Calvin had little contact with Jews, since they had been expelled from France in 1394 and Geneva in 1491; that "Calvin didn't go out of his way to harass the Jews but was "content to keep them out of Geneva and to repeat traditional anti-Judaic statements";[87] that he, like other Christian theologians, is simply repeating traditional stereotypes or common rhetorical devices; that his language was not as virulent as Luther's or that of other sixteenth-century theologians;[88] that he does not dwell on or frequently mention the most common of the stereotypes (e.g., the Jews as carnal or greedy); that when he castigates "the Jews" he usually ends by hurling even harsher condemnations at the "papists," his "real" enemy;[89] that "the Jews" is a trope that Calvin uses pedagogically;[90] or that though he may be

[84] In his *Judaism and Christianity*, trans. Walter Kaufman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960), p. 211.

[85] Clark W. Williamson, *Has God Rejected His People? Anti-Judaism in the Christian Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), pp. 102-03.

[86] Pater, "Calvin, the Jews, and the Judaic Legacy," pp. 290-91.

[87] Williamson, *Has God Rejected His People?*, p. 102.

[88] Heiko Oberman's *The Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Age of Renaissance and Reformation*, trans. James I. Porter (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) points the way to a much more adequate interpretation of theologies of the sixteenth century, partly because he does not compare everyone positively to Luther.

[89] Pater, "Calvin, the Jews, and the Judaic Legacy," pp. 288-89.

[90] Pater's comment that "Calvin's polemical references to 'Jewish' ceremonial should

guilty of anti-Judaism, he is not guilty of anti-Semitism.[91] Any critical inquiry that wishes to determine Calvin's role in the history of Christianity's relationship to the Jews and Judaism cannot be satisfied with any of these attempts to explain away the negative side of his view.

Heiko Oberman's brief suggestion that a comparison of Calvin's early sermons (which are more negative on the Jews) and his post-1549 sermons (in which he more positively associates the exiled evangelical communities with the Jews) may clear up the disparity the reader cannot avoid noticing in Calvin's comments on the Jews, is not warranted by the texts.[92] Salo Baron's creative resolution of this tension in Calvin's thought is also, as the foregoing analysis has shown, unsupported by the sermons. Distinguishing between Calvin's intent and Calvinism's effects, he concludes that "the total effect of Calvin's anti-Jewish preaching resembled that of the ancient prophecy of Balaam. The Genevan reformer, too, set out to curse the Jews, but in the end turned out to have blessed them."[93] This solution, too, is inadequate since it depends finally on a reading of Calvin that emphasizes only his negative language about the Jews.

What then are we to say, even provisionally, about Calvin's relationship to the Jews and Judaism on the basis of his sermons? First, that he does indeed use the trope of "the Jews" pedagogically in his evangelical reconstruction of Christianity. Second, that this trope is used in a wide variety of ways, leading us to no simple conclusions about Calvin's understanding and evaluation of the Jews and Judaism. And finally, that this complex pedagogical use that includes widely disparate evaluations and language points to an ambiguous heritage that needs to be sorted out by further critical studies if we are to determine with greater care Calvin's specific role in the history of Christianity's relationship to the Jews and Judaism.

Finally, what do these provisional conclusions tell us about Calvin's Commentary on Romans 9-11? As this long detour through Calvin's pedagogical use of "the Jews" in his sermons has shown, Calvin's relation to the Jews

largely be dismissed as the adoption of unfortunate terminology" ("Calvin, The Jews, and the Judaic Legacy," p. 286), is, therefore, an evasion.

[91] The line between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism is not as clearly defined as many scholars would like. Recognition of this is one of the strengths of Oberman's *The Roots of Anti-Semitism*. As Arthur A. Cohen points out in his Afterword to Markish's *Erasmus and the Jews*, Markish's zeal to prove that Erasmus was "no commonplace anti-Semitic vulgarian" (p. 146) leads him to underestimate the power of his formulaic anti-Judaism and the role it played in the history of anti-Semitism (pp. 146-54). Jaques Courvoisier's distinction between theological and racial anti-Semitism and admission of only the former in Calvin is, therefore, to be questioned ("Calvin et les Juifs," *Judaica* 2 [1946]: 206).

[92] Oberman, *The Roots of Anti-Semitism*, pp. 144-45, n. 6.

[93] Baron, "John Calvin and the Jews," p. 163.

and Judaism is every bit as maddeningly complex as Paul's is. All the themes discussed here are present in the commentary as well, and with no greater clarity. One could argue persuasively that in his sermons and the *Commentary on Romans* Calvin intensifies the tensions and paradoxes we find in Paul. But it is perhaps wiser to conclude at this point that in these texts Calvin simply found his own way of being true to Paul on this issue, who, as he remarks in his Commentary on Romans 9, was attempting "to grant them [the Jews] their privileges in such a way that he does not detract from Christ in any respect."[94] To those expecting Calvin "the systematician" to make sense out of Romans 9-11, whether in the commentary itself or in the sermons, this will be a great disappointment. If such modest conclusions fall far short of solving the puzzle of interpreting Calvin's Commentary on Romans 9-11 or even his relationship to the Jews and Judaism, at least they may serve to challenge and to deepen our understanding of one sixteenth-century theologian's role in Christianity's relationship to the Jews and Judaism.

[94] Calvin, *Commentary on Romans*, p. 190 (trans. Mackenzie's).

Righteousness and God's Righteousness[1]

by Michael Welker

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To practice righteousness and to act with unbounded arbitrariness—the two are incompatible. Since Paul's discussion in Rom. 9-11, especially in Rom. 9, seems to speak of the unbounded arbitrariness of the God who elects and rejects, wringing insights on the theme of "righteousness" from that discussion does not come easy. Not only at first glance, but at the second as well, it is hardly possible to go along with the idea that it is precisely Rom. 9-11 that leads to an *understanding* of God's righteousness. One need not be a superficial type, accustomed merely to cursory reading and to listening only in passing, in order to find contradictions to every conceivable form of righteousness presented in this text and, depressingly, attributed to God.

Paul speaks in Rom. 9-11 of the God who loved Jacob and hated Esau (9:13); who has mercy on whom God will, and who has compassion on whom God will (9:15); indeed, who not only has mercy "upon whomever God will," but who also "hardens the heart" of whom God will (9:18).[2] Paul seems to be referring to a God who has put arbitrariness in the place of righteousness. By means of independence, by means of freedom of choice and predestination (9:11), by means of a will which endures no contradiction (9:19), this God may emerge triumphant and prove God's irresistible power. But in no way does the strength of will thus demonstrated or the power and force thus described seem to be able even to be brought into an associative connection with "righteousness." Paul seems to characterize his God by means of power in the sense of arbitrariness and irresistible force—*instead* of by means of righteousness. He seems simply to quash the justified objection that irresistible arbitrariness of God's disposition over humankind likewise totally destroys the capacity for responsibility and other requisite conditions for righteousness to be practiced among human beings. With a *renewed* appeal to that arbitrariness and mere superior force, apparently

[1] Translation by John Hoffmeyer. Sigrid Brandt and Wilhelm Breder offered constructive critiques of the first version of this text. Daniel Migliore and Richard Fenn challenged me to try to improve my contribution by their "Responses" at the Symposium. I am most grateful and indebted to them.

[2] Biblical citations are taken from the RSV, with alterations to avoid gender-exclusive language. Other occasional alterations are noted where they occur in the body of the text.

practiced by God, Paul writes: "You will say to me then, 'Why does God still find fault? For who can resist God's will?' But who are you, a human being, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, 'Why have you made me thus?' Has the potter no right over the clay . . . ?" (9:19ff.).[3]

But where the triumph of God's unbounded arbitrariness is invoked, there all marks of righteousness grow hazy and disappear. If Paul were only concerned with trying to pass off the effectuation and maintenance of a dependence upon God as *God's* righteousness, a dependence that is unquestioningly and impotently to be accepted, then that would strengthen Paul's readers in their worst prejudices, that the God of the Old and New Testaments is at heart only a despot. The emphasis upon the absolute dependence of all human beings on such a God could not be distinguished from the demand to subjugate oneself in blind submission to nameless fate. Against such a background, Paul's comment that he bears witness to the "zeal for God" of his Israelite brothers and sisters—but that it is a "zeal without *knowledge*" (10:2)—would sound like mockery. How could one *know* the righteousness of a God of whom it is true that "God has mercy upon whomever God wills, and hardens the heart of whomever God wills"?

In the perspective on Rom. 9-11 that we have described, the perspective that initially imposes itself upon us, the whole line of thought advanced by Paul strikes us as forced and inconsistent. How can one require "knowledge," praise the "depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God," and at the same time emphasize that God's decisions are "unsearchable" and God's ways "inscrutable" (11:33)? Moreover, Paul seems circuitously evasive and unpersuasive when, on the one hand, he denies the Israelites the "knowledge," but on the other hand, admits that they possess "the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises" (see 9:4-5). What kind of God would, on the one hand, by the divine word give to God's people adoption, glory, covenants, worship, and promises, but on the other hand, deny them knowledge? Is the answer here merely that this is a God who "hardens the heart of whomever God will"? If so, then at any rate one will not be able to attribute *righteousness* to this God. Ought not one to characterize a being who with good promises and beneficent arrangements initially awakens great expectations and effects security of expectations, but who does not allow women and men to attain to

[3] The problems of consistency and convincing power in Paul's argumentation are emphasized by the contributions of Paul van Buren, Christiaan Beker, and Mary Potter Engel in this volume.

a right knowledge of God and hardens their hearts—ought not one to characterize such a being more as an evil, tormenting spirit and cynic than as a righteous God?

When on top of that we are assured that the hearts of some out of the house of Israel were *not* hardened (11:5ff.), and that the Gentiles, who were *not* striving after righteousness, have received it (9:30), the bottomlessness and limitlessness of God's arbitrariness seem to be proven completely. Maybe we swallow theology's assurance that *in this way* all self-righteousness and all boasting of human beings is rejected. Yet at what cost does this take place? Is not all self-righteousness of human beings rejected at the cost of *God's righteousness* simply becoming unrecognizable behind the arbitrariness with which God elects some and hardens the hearts of others?

At the outset of my reflections on Rom. 9-11 I would like to take those questions seriously. They mark nothing less than some of the basic difficulties which Christian theology in general, and Reformed theology in particular, have with the so-called doctrines of election and predestination. I would like to show that Rom. 9-11 gives an answer to the questions posed above that is not particularly simple, but that is nevertheless clear and univocal. I would like to show that in this answer God's righteousness becomes formally recognizable as well, and is described in a way that even non-Christians can understand and follow. With this answer, Paul renders superfluous all theologies which, with a merely obfuscatory reference to "the Christ event," draw back from the questions posed above. Paul renders superfluous, above all, theologies which, with a lot of solemn hand-waving about the numinous and the paradoxical, wish to pass off God's unbounded power and arbitrariness as specific to God's righteousness. God's righteousness confronts human claims of righteousness not in a numinous or even obscure way, but clearly and determinately.

I would like to show this in the three following sections. I would like first to consider the relation between righteousness and mercy in the law traditions of the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, in the Messianic promises, and in Rom. 9-11. In this context, the question "What is God's righteousness?" is to be specified. Second, the ways shall be presented in which, according to the Messianic promises, righteousness and *universal* knowledge of God are realized in differentiated forms in Israel and among the Gentiles. Third, God's righteousness will be described in the tension between God's faithfulness and God's glory. We shall see how God's righteousness alters human ideas of righteousness and human claims to having realized righteousness.

I. Righteousness and Mercy

I understand the practice of mercy as turning to those who are weaker, waiving claims and refraining from pressing home one's interests, and even abstaining, in favor of those who are weaker, the outsiders, and the disadvantaged, from pressing home one's legitimate claims under the law. Thus understood, mercy has still to regain in our cultures the position which the biblical traditions attribute to it. If I am not mistaken, according to our contemporary consciousness of right and our contemporary moral sensibility, mercy is restricted to the chance mood of the charitable individual, the chance situation which triggers corresponding impulses, or the discretion of high political leaders in rare and extreme limit situations: e.g., the response to pleas for clemency. According to biblical traditions, by contrast, mercy is an element of *God's law*. What does that mean?

In the codes of law (*Gesetz*) in the Bible, one finds ordinances for settling legal conflicts (*Rechtskonflikte*[4]) and ordinances that have to do with cultic affairs. From the earliest traditions onward, though, one also finds regulations that work towards the waiver of claims in order to protect those persons who are worse off economically and socially, and that work towards their reintegration in the legal and social community. Slaves, strangers and those who are isolated, widows and orphans, the poor, and those who are without power and influence are already explicitly named in the earliest biblical traditions as the groups who, by means of the mercy laws, must be brought to the level of general social, economic, and legal communication. At the least there is a need for efforts to keep them on this level, for their full and equal participation in communal life is threatened. Together with the regulations affecting legal justice and cultic practice, the mercy laws constitute the functional connection of God's law.[5] From the Book of the Covenant onward (cf. especially Ex. 21:2ff. and 22:20ff.) we find—with different and changing relative importance—all three groups of regulations in all the great codes of law. In the development of law in the Hebrew Bible, we can indeed observe what recent sociology calls the "differentiation of the legal system (*Recht*)."[6] This differentiation of the normal settlement of legal

[4] Both *Gesetz* and *Recht* can be translated as "law." *Recht* also means "right" and "justice." In this article, "law" will be reserved for translating *Gesetz* (with one exception, which is dictated by current usage, and will be noted when it appears). Either "legal justice" or simply "justice" will translate *Recht*. Compounds built upon *Recht* will be rendered by constructions using "legal": e.g., *Rechtskonflikte* as "legal conflicts."

[5] For further detail, see M. Welker, "Security of Expectations. Reformulating the Theology of Law and Gospel," *Journal of Religion* 66 (1986): 237ff.

[6] Niklas Luhmann, *Ausdifferenzierung des Rechts. Beiträge zur Rechtssoziologie und Rechtstheorie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981).

cases leads to a situation where only foundational and limit problems of legal justice are preserved in God's law. At the same time, the regulations having to do with cultic practice undergo an enormous expansion in Deuteronomy and the texts of law of the Priestly writings. The regulations having to do with mercy, however, remain astonishingly constant in this development (all the way to the connection between wisdom theology and theology of law—a connection which favors the regulations having to do with mercy). The overall conclusion is that, first, in spite of such displacements in relative weight, there remain three irreducible groups of regulations—namely legal justice, mercy, and cult (whereby "cult" is to be understood as the public, regulated, and shared relation to God, which is the object of shared expectations). Second, those three groups constitute the decisive contents of God's law. Correspondingly, Mt. 23:23 still emphasizes "justice and mercy and faith" as "the weightier matters of the law."

That means, however, that in the perspective of God's law, righteousness cannot even be conceived without mercy: i.e., without continual turning to the poor, the weak, the disadvantaged, the outsiders and the excluded, and without their acceptance and reintegration into the community. The early writing prophets, especially Amos, make this strikingly clear in a differentiated way by showing that a people who lack mercy begin to pervert legal justice and to misuse cultic life. The perversion of legal justice and the misuse of cultic life become recognizable in the lack of mercy. This development leads to community decline that can become irremediable. The illusion of a well-ordered relationship with God, and political as well as economic successes, cannot deceive the prophets about the fact that the community which disdains mercy is eroding, that it is inwardly decaying, and that it will be no match for dangers which come to it from the outside, e.g., in the form of natural catastrophes and military threats. By contrast, a community which routinely practices mercy, indeed, which allows the dynamic of its legal development to be determined by mercy, gains strength in all its functions.

The important *Messianic* traditions in the texts of Isaiah which speak explicitly about *God's spirit resting or remaining* on God's chosen bearer of the spirit, describe in great clarity the righteousness that God intends for the benefit of human beings. God's chosen one, on whom God's spirit remains or rests, will *establish justice by simultaneously practicing mercy* with those who are poor, insignificant, and bowed down. The three decisive texts Is. 11:1ff., 42:2ff., and 61:1ff. emphasize this strict connection between justice

and mercy as the high minimal condition for the spread of real righteousness.

According to Is. 11:4, the righteousness which is characteristic of and spread by the Messianic bearer of the spirit is determined by the fact that he judges "the helpless" "with righteousness" and decides "with equity for the poor of the land" (trans. altered). Is. 42:3 also connects the statement that the Messianic bearer of the spirit brings justice with an explicit reference to the dominant orientation upon mercy: ". . . a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench: he will faithfully bring forth justice" (see also 42:7). Finally, Is. 61 connects the establishment of justice and righteousness with the joyous message which the Messiah and bearer of the spirit sends out for those who are poor, imprisoned, in chains, and in mourning (Is. 61:3, 8 and 11).

As at least 14 citations in the three chapters Rom. 9-11 confirm, Paul had the Isaiah traditions continually before his eyes.[7] When he emphasizes that God is *righteous* precisely by practicing *mercy*, he need not invoke the numinous or the paradoxical. Nor need he lay claim to a "righteousness" which human beings simply cannot comprehend, and which supposedly for that very reason is to be termed "divine." The great codes of law as well as the Messianic traditions make clear, rather, that mercy is constitutive of a legal development that realizes righteousness. Orders of legal justice and orders of life that are not marked and determined by mercy cannot be regarded as forms of justice and righteousness intended by God. Thus the first impression is dispelled that Rom. 9-11 is talking about a *mere* arbitrariness of God which can only be determined *in opposition* to every understanding of righteousness. The answer to the question framed by Paul: "What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part?," is now partially comprehensible: "By no means! For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So it depends not upon human will or exertion, but upon God's mercy" (Rom. 9:14-16; see also 30-32).

It is liberating and comforting to know that God's mercy breaks through human spectra of judgment concerning what is to be regarded and defended as just and fair. It is liberating and comforting that God stands by those who cannot obtain justice and righteousness for themselves. Yet as liberating and comforting as those things are, it is difficult to strike up a hymn in praise of mere mercy when one has attentively taken note of the law and the Messi-

[7] See also the important observation of David Satran in this volume, that the images used in Rom. 9:20-21 and 11:17-24 might have been taken out of Is. 60:21!

anic promises. According to them, God's mercy and the mercy that God also intends to be exercised among human beings is characterized by the strict connection between righteousness and knowledge of God.

However God's turning in mercy to the Gentiles is to be described more precisely, it cannot in any way call God's righteousness into question, nor allow it to become unclear or even unrecognizable. An action which *some*-how brings *some*thing good to *some*one in *some* need is not mercy. Neither, however, would an action deserve the great name of righteousness which permitted a previously disadvantaged group of people to come to the fore and to gain the advantage, and which in exchange allowed those who had previously enjoyed the advantage now to doubt God's faithfulness, reliability, and dependability. But can we, according to Rom. 9-11, exclude the possibility that God arbitrarily turns first to this, then to that group of people, and that God does this not only at the expense of the "other" group in each situation, but also at the expense of the continuity and clarity of the revelation of God's will? Can we make clear that God's word has *not* ceased to be viable? Can we show that the mercy attested to in God's word, in law and promise, is a constitutive element of *God's righteousness*? Can we make it conceivable that this mercy which is constitutive of God's righteousness manifests itself in the election of the Gentiles, "who did not pursue righteousness" (cf. 9:30 and 10:19)? And how can this be made comprehensible from Israel's perspective as well? How can it be made clear that there is no cause for Israel to doubt God's steadfastness and faithfulness, and thus God's righteousness? The perception that mercy is constitutive of the righteousness intended by God puts an end to the impression of *mere* arbitrariness, but it makes us ask what exactly God's righteousness constituted by mercy is.

II. Messianic Promise, Righteousness, and Universal Knowledge of God

The Messianic promises in Is. 11, 42, and 61 speak of the establishment of justice, mercy, and knowledge of God. It is important to see that these three texts, which deal with the spirit's resting or remaining upon the Messiah, also mention all three functional elements of the law.[8] Equally important, though, is the observation that, according to the information supplied by all three texts, both the fulfillment of the expectations of righteousness and the knowledge of God *do not remain confined to Israel*.

Is. 11:9 reads: "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain:

[8] For further detail, see M. Welker, "Gesetz und Geist," *Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie*, vol. 4 (1989): 215ff.

for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." Connected with that is the fact that Israel will be doubly striking to the peoples, and a power doubled in force will emanate from Israel upon the peoples. First, Israel, filled by righteousness and knowledge of God, will directly attract the peoples. "In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples: him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious" (11:10). Second, as is recorded by what is most likely a later addition,[9] dispersed Israel is gathered "from the four corners of the earth," and this again is connected with an "ensign for the peoples" (See Is. 11:11-12).

Is. 42 thematizes still more clearly the universality of the knowledge of righteousness and of God mediated by the Messianic bearer of the spirit. The chosen one of God brings justice to the peoples and grounds upon earth the justice upon which even the most removed regions of the world wait (42:1 and 4). Independently of how we decide the difficult question whether according to Is. 42, especially 42:6, an individual or a community is destined to be a "light for the peoples," we should note that the universal establishment of justice marked by mercy brings with it the knowledge of God which is to be universally propagated (cf. Is. 42:8 and 12). The mediation of the illumination of the peoples, which is to be universally propagated and which corresponds to God's being the creator (42:5), is explicitly described as an act of *mercy* which proceeds from *righteousness*: "I (Yahweh) have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you . . . to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness" (42:6 and 7). A mercy which is practiced in connection with righteousness, which is indeed practiced on account of righteousness, aims at universal knowledge of righteousness and of God among the peoples. In spite of the stronger emphasis, over against Is. 11, upon the intended worldwide relevance of the event—intended from the outset—Is. 42 (see esp. 6b!) leaves no doubt that it is primarily Israel which is involved and affected.[10]

This connection between first Israel's and then the peoples' being affected by God's revelation and the manifestation of God's righteousness is clarified

[9] See Hermann Barth, *Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit. Israel und Assur als Thema einer produktiven Neuinterpretation der Jesaja-Überlieferung*, *WMANT* 48 (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag: 1977), p. 58. In this context I am leaving aside the notion of the "remnant" in Is. 11:11 and 16, which most likely means the "relative" remnant which still remains in Assyria. See Hans Wildenberger, *BKAT* X/1: 467-68.

[10] On the one hand, this is underlined by the note in Is. 42:21, directed against "disobedient" Israel, that God "was pleased, for the sake of God's righteousness, to magnify God's law and make it glorious." On the other hand, it is underlined by the centering of the peoples and nations upon Israel, described in Is. 43.

in Is. 61 in the following way. Through the Messianic bearer of the spirit, a universal knowledge of God is effected among the peoples (Is. 61:11: "... so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all peoples" [trans. altered]) which has its center precisely in the knowledge of the righteousness and mercifulness established in Israel. "Strangers" and "foreigners" will characterize Israel as a mirror of God's righteousness and glory. Strangers and foreigners will accept the God of Israel as *their own* God. More precisely, they will identify their own god as God of Israel: "... but you (the Israelites) shall be called 'priests of the LORD,' people shall speak of you as 'ministers of our (!) God'" (trans. altered). And in "all nations," in "all peoples," the story with regard to the descendants of Israel will run thus: "... all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed" (Is. 61:6a and 9b; cf. also Is. 62:1ff. and 12). The promise made to Abraham will be universally recognizable and universally recognized (See Gen. 12:1-3).

The peoples do not only take notice of the Messianic establishment of justice, mercy, and knowledge of God in Israel.[11] They get a share in this event, they become involved in it by reaching a knowledge of God that is connected with the experience of righteousness. Thus it is already recorded in the Messianic promises of the Hebrew Bible that an establishment in Israel of justice, mercy, and knowledge of God which mediated *no* knowledge of God to the Gentiles, which thus did not mercifully include them, would in any case not be an establishment of the righteousness of God which could appeal to the *Messianic promises*.

The radiation of this event to the peoples, the participation of the peoples in Israel's experience of righteousness and knowledge of God, is inseparably connected with the establishment of the Messianically-promised righteousness of God. This process whereby the peoples become participants, this universal radiation, does not signify any diminution of salvation for Israel. Quite the contrary! The merciful participation of the peoples in the experience of God and God's righteousness only redounds to Israel's recognition and honor, and to many positive repercussions by means of this event. Above all, as is to be shown later, only the inclusion of the peoples reveals the full *glory* of God's righteousness.

Rom. 9-11 says that this event, to which the Messianic promises look for-

[11] Patrick Miller has pointed out to me that this holds true even beyond the prophetic perspective. Cf. such texts as Deuteronomy 4, 8, 11, 15 or Psalms 46 and 126. The involvement of the peoples can already be found in reflections about the fulfillment of the blessing bestowed on Abraham in the Pentateuch.

ward, has begun. To be sure, only for a part of Israel is it already revealed. However, it will become recognizable and efficacious for all Israel. This event sets the Gentiles equal to Israel with regard to the knowledge of God and the experience of God's righteousness, as was Messianically anticipated. And it does so without depriving Israel of the precedence of a natural and historical centering upon it.

III. God's Righteousness, God's Faithfulness, and God's Glory

All understandings of God's righteousness which wish to contest a natural-historical centering upon Israel, and the honor of Israel connected with that, must disregard Rom. 9-11 in several respects. The Israelites have "the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises; theirs are the patriarchs and from them, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever. Amen" (9:4-5). Moreover, going beyond the open number of Gentiles destined for salvation, "all Israel will be saved, as it is written: 'The deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob' " (11:26).[12]

To be sure, the Gentiles are also destined to be children of the living God, destined to the knowledge of God and the experience of God's righteousness. But they do not achieve clarity concerning that destiny in the framework of just any experience, be it religious or otherwise, out of just any heathen tradition. Rather they achieve the clarity concerning that destiny in the field of reference that, determined by the promises made to Israel (see 9:8ff.), is newly opened to them and appears in a new light through their Messianic experience, through the coming, the suffering, and the dying of Jesus Christ. Paul graphically describes this natural-historical centering of the Gentiles upon Israel as wild olive branches being grafted onto the "cultivated olive tree" (see 11:16ff.).[13]

According to Rom. 9-11, what the Gentiles who believe in Christ have in common with a part of Israel, and what they have ahead, so far, of another part of Israel, is the knowledge—admittedly, extremely significant knowledge—that *Jesus Christ* is the Messiah of whom the promises speak. The

[12] This transcending, together with the difficulties in determining the precise meaning of "all Israel," is documented by Ferdinand Hahn, "Zum Verständnis von Röm 11.26a: '. . . und so wird ganz Israel gerettet werden,' in *Paul and Paulinism. Festschrift for C.K. Barrett*, ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (London: SPCK, 1982), 221ff., esp. 229. The most subtle elaboration of this problem is offered in part IV of Otfried Hofius' contribution in this volume.

[13] See Otfried Hofius, "Das Evangelium und Israel. Erwägungen zu Röm 9-11," *ZThK* 83 (1986): 297ff., 308ff.

believers in Christ have the knowledge that he has brought into effect the righteousness of God, which brings with it justice, mercy, and universal knowledge of God. They have the knowledge that the promised deliverance is bound up with knowing him, confessing him, and believing in him.

Paul also draws upon the promises in Isaiah in reflecting upon the difficulty for Israel in recognizing and confessing the crucified Jesus of Nazareth as the chosen one of God, the bearer of the spirit who reveals God's righteousness. Rom. 10:15 and 16 take up Is. 52:7 and 53:1. There, on the one hand, one reads: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' " On the other hand: "Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" The answer given in Is. 53:2ff. is: ". . . he had no form or comeliness . . . He was despised and rejected by men and women . . ."

Why this anti-climax? Why are not the law's intentions of salvation fulfilled and transcended in a universalizing manner by a Messiah who would be recognizable without a doubt to *all* Israel? Why is salvation brought at all by one who is "despised and rejected by men and women?" How can one who is thus despised prepare the way for the *knowledge* of God's righteousness?

Whoever is able, in view of the talk of "salvation," to rest content with imprecise notions of transcendence and inclusion, will not be able to answer those questions. In the framework of a simple success story, be it the success story of a "salvation-bringer" who has the political strength to carry the day, or be it in the framework of a success story of a people of exemplary justice, the inclusion of the Gentiles or the peoples is just so conceived *somehow or another*. But "God's righteousness" is not thereby comprehended.

What does it mean that God *has mercy* upon the Gentiles? As truly as God is *just*, that in no case means that the "families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3b) experience salvation directed to them in a lesser way, that the Gentiles experience, so to speak, a qualitatively subordinate or even second-class treatment by God.[14] God wills to demonstrate on the "vessels of mercy" nothing less than the *glory*, indeed the "*riches* of the glory of God" (Rom. 9:23). This excludes simple notions of inclusion which settle the peoples on the second level or in the mere horizon of the righteousness established in

[14] Paul W. Meyer rightly says that the gospel "even provided the non-Jew with equal access to what Paul located at the very core of Jewish identity . . ." *Harper's Bible Commentary*, ed. James L. Mays (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), p. 1154.

Israel, or which center them upon the salvation experienced by Israel *only in its own self*. Notwithstanding the emphasized historical and natural centering upon Israel, we must grasp the no less than overwhelming aspect of the promise that the Messiah also fulfills the *Gentiles'* expectations of righteousness (Is. 42)—expectations of righteousness that are not determined by Israel's law—we must grasp the aspect that the Messiah also awakens the *Gentiles'* knowledge of God.[15] The *Israelites* will be called servants of "*our*" God (Is. 61). "Our" God—that means the God of those who are, in the eyes of Israel, strangers and foreigners. This directness, this authenticity of the access of strangers, of foreigners, of Gentiles to the God of Israel and to that God's righteousness can indeed be frightening. It is overwhelming to experience that God's mercy not only mitigates and makes more bearable the situation of a human being, a group, or a people who are in a worse position than others, but also that God's mercy bestows the glory, indeed the riches of the glory of God. The experience of the threat that salvation will be alienated, removed, uprooted, and relativized is oppressive in proportion to the solidity with which the religious tradition and the self-localization in it are constructed, and in proportion to the clarity of the normative structure which has been appropriated and internalized. The tried and familiar ranges of judgment which have grown up, which provide the measure for determining inner and outer, belonging and alien, closer to and further from God, stronger and weaker in faith—these ranges of judgment are broken up.

Paul recognizes in this experience not a miserable relativism, but rather the establishment of God's glorious righteousness, which calls into question and transcends human ranges of judgment. This recognition, according to Paul, calls for us to hold fast to Jesus of Nazareth, who was rejected, despised, and executed in the name of the religious and political orders. But that also means taking seriously the promise of Is. 53. In no way can one play off "the promise directed to the peoples, but including all Israel," against the promise "directed to Israel, but including all peoples."[16]

In recognizing as Messiah Jesus of Nazareth, who was rejected and despised by Jews and Gentiles, condemned and executed in the name of their supporting orders, human beings become open to the knowledge of God's

[15] See also Hans Hübner, "Der 'Messias Israels' und der 'Christus des Neuen Testaments,'" *Kerygma und Dogma* 27 (1981): 217ff., esp. 230ff.; Nikolaus Walter, "Zur Interpretation von Römer 9-11," *ZThK* 81 (1984): 172ff., esp. note 44.

[16] See also Hans-Martin Lübking, *Paulus und Israel im Römerbrief. Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9-11*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Series XXIII, vol. 260 (Frankfurt, Bern and New York: Peter-Lang-Verlag, 1986), esp. pp. 154-156.

righteousness, which calls into question and surpasses their previous notions and practices of righteousness. Even the most well-intentioned, and apparently most verified, well-structured, and recognized forms and practices of righteousness are radically called into question. They are radically called into question in favor of a *richer experience of righteousness*, of clearer experiences of justice, mercy and a clearer knowledge of God. Even a righteousness whose spectrum of judgment has developed a sensitivity for mercy, and which has even been transfigured by notions of God—even such a righteousness of a particular group of human beings, a particular tradition, a particular normative lineage, is broken, relativized, and transcended. Bound up with that is a rejection of all attempts to establish our own individual and collective well-being at the expense of others. That rejection is very difficult for a well-structured normative consciousness to tolerate. It is very difficult to tolerate the rejection of all attempts to determine the measure of what is advantageous to outsiders and what is their due in the framework of one's *own* standards of justice and mercy. It is very difficult to tolerate the connected vulnerability and development of sensitivity for others, for new expectations of righteousness, expectations of mercy, and experiences of God. It is difficult to tolerate all this unless one lives in the sphere of power of the rejected and despised Messiah, the sphere of power in which the experience of failure and the experience that the renewal of human ideas of righteousness is necessary have become basic experiences.

Wherever one has not concerned oneself with the *knowledge* of God's righteousness, and has cultivated and disguised the unconsciously introduced forms or formlessness of one's own self-righteousness, there one has not perceived that it is difficult to tolerate the reproach that human beings fixated upon works of law would only establish their own righteousness. It is also hardly going out on a limb to assert that nebulous knowledge of God's righteousness and veiled, diffuse self-righteousness are characteristics of Christianity, especially in its modern, individualistic, and moralized expressions. Paul emphasizes explicitly that to know the crucified and risen Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah and to publicly confess him is to perceive and recognize the dynamic righteousness of God.[17] The acceptance in faith of God's righteousness is identical with the proclamation of the Messiah, with the placement of oneself in his realm of power, with the readiness to continual self-relativization in view of the righteousness, mercy, and knowledge of God established by the coming of the Messiah. The acceptance in faith of

[17] Cf. Rom. 10:3ff.

God's righteousness is identical with the readiness to receive the riches of God's glory.

It is important to observe that Paul describes the establishment of the righteousness of faith with words which Dt. 30 uses regarding the establishment of the law (cf. Dt. 30:11ff. and Rom. 10:6ff.).[18] Justice, mercy, and knowledge of God—the objects of the law—are realized by the Messiah in a way that calls into question human ranges of judgment and transcends them. It is difficult to tolerate this relativizing and transcending without falling into sloppy, vague, and diffuse attitudes of consciousness, that allow God's righteousness to degenerate into obfuscatory jargon.

Christian faith seems to me to stand chronically in that danger. Rather than removing that danger, countless moralizing campaigns only strengthen it. The Messianic experience of other human beings, other peoples and, along with it, the establishment of justice, mercy, and the knowledge of God calls into question and transcends our own ideas and achievements of righteousness. This challenge that even our own morally-sensitive and religiously-consolidated ideas and achievements are called into question turns into an experience of strength and liberation if it is grounded in the experience of the Messianic community. The concern with preserving the clarity and distinctness of God's universal righteousness can and must be based on the knowledge of the Messiah as despised and rejected.

It is not political and moral heroes, powerful, proven normative forms, but the crucified Messiah and the field of power centered on him that ever anew make clear and distinct the knowledge of God's righteousness. It is to Israel's hardening that we are indebted for the knowledge that faith in the Messiah is concerned with the experience of God's righteousness which realizes justice, mercy, and the knowledge of God in heterogeneous communities and cultures. Israel challenges the world of the peoples to witness to the Messiah in a way that enables human beings to see clearly the "fulfillment of the law" as achieved through his having come. In this way Israel, as it continues to close itself to the knowledge of the Messiah, fulfills a remarkable function in orienting the Gentiles to the realistic righteousness of

[18] See Hans-Joachim Eckstein, " 'Nahe ist dir das Wort.' Exegetische Erwägungen zu Röm 10, 8," *ZNW* 79 (1988): "Paulus versteht also das Evangelium, das er in Röm 10, 8 mit dem 'nahen Wort' in Dtn. 30, 14 identifiziert hat, zugleich als die Botschaft der Freudenboten bei Deuterojesaja, so daß für ihn zwischen der Verkündigung Deuterojesajas und dem Abschnitt Dtn. 30, 11-14 ein innerer Zusammenhang besteht. Aufgrund dieses Zusammenhangs vermag der Apostel in Dtn. 30, 11-14 die Stimme der Glaubensgerechtigkeit zu vernehmen—obwohl der Text nach seinem Literalsinn vom tätigen Gehorsam gegenüber der Sinai-Tora spricht" (p. 219).

God. It is the righteousness of God who mercifully elects the Gentiles and who is faithful to Israel (see Rom. 11:11ff.).[19] In turn, the enrichment of the Gentiles in fulfillment of their expectations of righteousness and in the awakening of the knowledge of God shall mirror for Israel the riches of the glory of God who gives righteousness not exhaustible by the forces of human cultures. The enrichment of the Gentiles shall provoke Israel to "jealousy," entice it to knowledge of the Messiah (see 11:13ff.), and to the knowledge of the riches of God's glory.

A theology which not only attempts to reproduce Paul's thoughts, but to continue them, would indeed need first to develop a sensibility for the numerous ways in which the contemporary testimony that "We have found the Messiah!" (John 1:42) is impotent and unworthy of belief. That testimony's lack of power to persuade is almost completely grounded in the separation between knowledge of the Messiah and clear expectation of the establishment of God's righteousness and a corresponding praxis. Then an obscure power play, a mercy which effects no righteousness, all sorts of notions of righteousness in accordance with the morals of the day, private and more or less clearly-harmonized collective religious, political, and moral forms of egoism stand in the center of the faith. More precisely, they push their way into that center.

Over against that process, it is the shared task of Israel and the church, by means of their complicated relation, to witness to God's righteousness in the tension created by the bestowal of God's faithfulness and God's glory. God's righteousness, in which God gives divine mercy to human beings and thus chooses them for the distinction of experiencing God's glory and being mirrors of that glory, aims at bringing about justice, mercy, and knowledge of God among persons. Perceiving this means holding open and vulnerable for each other ways and forms in which groups of people, times, and cultures experience the connection between justice, mercy, and knowledge of God. It is precisely through their process of mutual relativization and transcendence, precisely in their capacity for revision in spite of readiness for perfection and stability, that the forms of openness to God's righteousness differ from all varieties of self-righteousness.

The immeasurable and unfathomable glory of God's righteousness is experienced not only in the tension between national and historically marked identities. It is also experienced in the situations of conflict between the sexes, between age groups, and between social strata. To be sure, the fact

[19] See also Otfried Hofius, "Das Evangelium und Israel. Erwägungen zu Röm 9-11," *ZThK* 83 (1986): 297ff., esp. 313-14.

that God's righteousness also wills to take shape in the midst of these situations of conflict is felt and emphasized more strongly in our time than by Paul.[20] That in these situations of tension God does not will to destroy us, but rather to allow us to grow; that in the midst of these and other situations of conflict God gathers the women and men of God's kingdom ever anew from the public power of the Messiah's powerless and forsaken situation—that is made clear by the surprising and liberating knowledge of God's righteousness.

[20] See Bernadette Brooten's contribution in this volume.

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